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THE WHITE MAN IN NIGERIA

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THE WHITE MAN IN NIGERIA

MAMODU IN GALA DRESS.

PASSENGERS LANDING IN SURF BOATS.

THE WHITE MAN IN NIGERIA

BY

GEORGE DOUGLAS HAZZLEDINE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
EDWARD ARNOLD
41 & 43 MADDOX STREET, BOND STREET, W.
1904

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TO

MY MOTHER

WHO LET ME GO

PREFACE

THESE chapters have been written in the hope they may be useful to the men who will go out to the magnificent work for civilization waiting to be done in Northern Nigeria, and also in the hope of showing those at home who take interest in such things that the control of the country is well worth retaining, even at an apparent financial loss for a few years.

I have tried to avoid all those controversies and questions upon which it would be presumption for a man with such a slight African experience as mine has been to express opinions, and to confine myself to an effort to represent the country and the service and the people as they would appear to men trained and living in England—as, in fact, they appeared to me—when fresh to them, and before habit had dulled the appreciation of differences.

At the risk of a little repetition each chapter has been made to stand by itself, and can be read without reference to any other; but if read one after the other in the order in which they have been placed they should give fuller and more definite ideas.

In some cases I have created typical characters to convey my meaning. There was, of course, no such man

as Musa, but lives such as Musa's have been lived, and are being lived to-day all over the country. So with Mamodu: there is not one Mamodu, but there are hundreds of him. He is a type, and I believe a faithful type, of the intelligent native there at this moment.

In conclusion, my best thanks are due to the *Morning Post*, *Macmillan's Magazine*, the *West African Mail*, and the *Empire Review*, for permission to make use of matter which has appeared in their pages.

G. D. H.

July, 1904.

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THE WHITE MAN IN NIGERIA

CHAPTER I

THE GRANT-IN-AID

A plea for more money—The immensity of Northern Nigeria—The Fulani, the ruling race—Their deterioration after Othman Fodio—Slave-raiding revived—Why Great Britain went to Northern Nigeria—The value of Hausaland as a market and for raw material—What must be done?

IT is said that more than half of the Government Grant-in-aid of the cost of administering Northern Nigeria goes for the upkeep of the West African Frontier Force, without which the old and profitable West Coast Colonies would not be safe, and that the sum at present allotted to the Civil Administration is absurdly inadequate. If this is so, why cannot Government do the thing properly? It surely cannot be that there is any fear of the British public not willingly finding all the money that may be necessary. If it were only a question of the Coast Colonies, it would be highly advisable to retain control of Northern Nigeria as a buffer State, and that, too, if it were as barren as the Great Desert and as unpopulated as the Poles. Luckily, it is neither one nor the other.

If anyone asks, he is told that the population of Northern Nigeria, or the Hausa States, is '10,000,000 to 25,000,000,' with a frank ignorance as to the mere fives of millions, which should provide food for thought. It is

not because we have only recently heard of the country, and have as yet had no opportunity of estimating its people. We have been in touch with the Hausa States for centuries; and the Hausa traders have for centuries been in evidence throughout the whole of Northern Africa—from Lagos to Tripoli, from Fez to the Nile. It has been known for centuries that the land was fertile beyond all dreams and teemed with people, swarming in vast cities of anything up to a quarter of a million souls—we suppose black men have souls. It has been known as the great negro preserve for centuries, and therein lies the reason of our uncertainty as to how many people—to 15,000,000—there are up the Niger. We do not know how many there are left. We have known for centuries that the innumerable villages have swarmed with kiddies, but we do not know how many have been let live.

We know that about a hundred years ago the rough and ready intertribal man-catching was stopped by the founding of the Fulani Dynasty by Othman Fodio, the first Fulani Sultan, which has lasted until now, organizing government, justice, and revenue, and protecting the people from the outside raiders of the Coast, who found a happy hunting-ground there for 'black ivory.' For a hundred years this dynasty has been all-powerful. Even the Londoner heard with interest from time to time of the alleged 20,000 breast-plated cavalrymen of Sokoto, and of the chain-armour of Kano. For a hundred years all caravans have paid heavy toll on passing in and out of Hausaland; and for a hundred years even white men have paid subsidies to native chiefs for the *right* not to have their stores unreasonably plundered, or their carriers 'caught' for slaves—too often. Yet for a hundred years the profits on trade with Hausaland have been so good that the stream of caravans to the Mediterranean has never ceased. It is appalling to think of the skeletons buried in the drifting sands of the Sahara, of the countless

bales of valuable goods ruined in the rush of the raid, as the helpless traders fell into the clutches of the thousand-and-one robber tribes of the desert. Thirst, lions, storms, thieves, and panic, gathered their doles year by year; but year by year caravans came through, and year by year Kano swarmed with Tripoli Arabs, as Tripoli swarmed with Kano Hausas.

To an immense extent the Fulani Dynasty was beneficial: it consolidated the innumerable Hausa tribes into one people, and it saved the country from the depopulation of the Coast raiders; but it was based upon a false economy. Protection was a baby to the monopoly of the Fulani, and it could not last. Othman prophesied on his death-bed that the dynasty he had founded would last but a hundred years, and well before that time it had indeed run its course. The Fulani was a great organizer, a born governor, an astute statesman, and an intrepid soldier; but his government degenerated into a mere collecting of tribute, his justice, excellent in theory, was bought and sold in practice, and his revenue was collected in slaves. The current coin of the realm was a slave; and as the power of Sokoto weakened, and outlying districts—until then protected from outsiders—were depopulated without retribution, the loyal tribes (*i.e.*, those which were near enough to be terrorized into submission) had to supply as much 'revenue' as the whole country had done before. Failure of tribute was the inevitable result, and punitive expeditions, tax-gathering tours, slave raids—slave raids pure and simple, call them what you will—began again.

Then, again, every woman about to become a mother went and hid in the bush like a wild beast until the baby was old enough not to be a fatal encumbrance in case of a hasty flight; then, again, the rumour that the Fulani were coming emptied great villages, and scattered the people over the face of the earth; then, again, the old and

feeble were put to the sword; then, again, children became scarce, the fields lay idle, and the land flowed with blood.

It was to save the country from this that Great Britain stepped in. It was to save this ancient people from extermination that Great Britain undertook before Europe to police 300,000 square miles of fertile land—from the desert to the Coast Colonies, from the old, dry water-course of the Dallul Mauri to Lake Chad. It was to change the darkest spot in darkest Africa back again into a land flowing with milk and honey that Great Britain took over the tremendous burden of administration from the Niger Company, and sent one of its greatest 'Africans' (Sir F. D. Lugard) with a small body of earnest men into the 'White Man's Grave.' Is it to be thought that the British public will grudge the money for a work like this? France is doing her share. With Timbuctoo, Dahomey, Zinder, Chad, and the Congo, she has, as the Americans put it, 'chawed off about as big a lump as she can chew.' Germany, in the Cameroons and Adamawa, has more than she wants. And are we, muling and puking, to follow the finger of the Little Englander, invest all our moneys in electric railways, schools, and scientific experiments, and leave the real work of the world to be done by nations who *can* breed men like those who made Great Britain the leader in civilization? We are the leading nation amongst the peoples, and it is our clear duty to take the place of the leading nation.

It is not a question of charity. Those who ask for money for the civilization of Northern Nigeria do not want it for tilting at windmills, and do not consider they are asking a favour. They are advising an investment. They do not promise 10 per cent. interest; they do not hold out hopes of doubling capital; they do not even say the capital will ever be paid back. But they do say that the Hausas, who are sending their goods to London by

way of the Desert, Tripoli, and Marseilles, will shortly ship them down the Niger direct to Manchester; that Manchester and other goods will go the same way in return; and that the land which now, with no cultivation beyond a little scratching, produces several heavy crops a year, may be made to produce abundance for our markets after satisfying all its own people; that the people who now grow their own cotton, weave their own cloth, and make their own clothes, beads, ornaments, and household utensils, will form a long-lasting market for the better stuff we can turn out for comparatively nothing; and that, when our electric railways, schools, and scientific experiments want renewing, our intercourse with the great Hausa people will mean to us funds and material for further progress.

This is the picture, and even now some can see its commencement. The great trade routes have been opened 'by the Power of the White Man,' so that they say even a woman can pass unmolested wherever the White Man has gone; the river was never so full of trading canoes; the land is burdened with crops, and the villages are swarming with children. This is the beginning. What will be the end? Are we to stay and reap prosperity, trade, and progress? or are we to back out, and leave the country to the raider and the sword? Are we to leave the Fulani, with shattered power and prestige utterly lost, to fight it out with the feckless Hausa and the cannibal pagan? or are we to stay with him, and nurse his undoubted organizing and governing ability into modern lines, weaning him from the slavery which is, after all, only out of date, and from the corruption which, at the worst, is not much worse than Tammany? If the question is fairly put to the public of Great Britain, what will the answer be? Why, if it were not our bounden duty before God and man to step in to stop the slavery alone, we ought surely to find the money to secure one of the most

promising openings the world has to offer for our inevitable expansion in the future. If it were not a solemn duty, it is a capital investment. It is, none the less, an investment, because it is for the future; and that nation will last longest which looks furthest into the future—the inevitable future.

CHAPTER II

THE SEVEN-POUNDER

The trained Hausa—No blank cartridges in Northern Nigeria—The seven-pounder compared with the Maxim and the horse—The old order and the new—A diplomatic *coup*—Personal valour at Bida—How Kontagora was outmarched—The Maxim at work—The 'Eye of God'—The Power of the White Man.

IN Sierra Leone the Hausa soldier lives in magnificent stone barracks on a hill overlooking the harbour, and does a great deal of work—police work. Accra is a lazy place for everyone, especially the soldier, though it is only fair to say there has lately been some excitement over selecting escorts for peaceable mining parties. At Lagos and Old Calabar the soldier grows oily, drills, wears fine new uniforms, forms guards of honour, and stands sentry over the Government cactus. It is in Northern Nigeria that the soldier knows nothing about blank cartridge. There he lives in grass huts, and is sometimes missing after a fire. There he is sent off to outpost duty as soon as he knows enough of his drill. There he travels light, wears rags, and is lucky if he can find a tree to rest or camp under. There he is sometimes hungry and often tired, but laughs like a schoolboy when suddenly ordered to go 'on palaver.' There he gets shot in the stomach, poisoned by arrows and snakes, and shattered by shot from cannon the Frenchman has given to the slave-raiding Emir.

It is in Northern Nigeria that he learns to worship the White Man—the pale-faced subaltern, whether from the Guards or from the Militia, who teaches him to fire a small toy of a rifle which kills at a mile; who sets him on a horse, and with him hunts down the flying Fulani, making him thereby equal to those who have domineered over him for generations; who never lets him touch the yellow machine which the sergeant sits on, and which goes 'brrr-rrrr-rrrr,' and 'everyone falls down flat,' but who makes him the happy priest of the stumpy little god on rattling wheels, which bangs and bounces like the thunder in heaven and wipes out whole villages far away almost out of sight. The horse is kept in the stable, and is a companion, a friend, and a kind of property to boot; the Maxim is kept in the mess-room, and, with the gramaphone, theodolite, and other wonderful 'ju-ju' things beyond the comprehension of the native mind, is an unfathomable mystery: but the seven-pounder is a god, a real, understandable, live god of polished steel, which hurls a heavy shell just the same as you throw a stone, only much, much further, and is carried on slings in luxury even when the White Man walks. The worship of the White Man is one thing—it is like the worship of the Fulani; the worship of the gun is another—it is the worship of the thunder and the whirlwind.

The Hausa soldier is about right. The gun is greater than the horse or the Maxim. The Fulani conquered the people with cavalry, hordes of horsemen moving great distances in the night, jangling, shouting, screaming, spreading panic right and left, slashing, riding down, and trampling on the unarmed and industrious Hausa. The Maxim is the quick and painless death in the reckless charge through which the Mohammedan, intoxicated with his religion, breaks into Paradise. Between the two comes the slaughter in cold blood of the seven-pounder. Slow, calm, and regular, it belches forth death, earth-

THE NEW MOUNTED INFANTRY—HAUSAS TRAINED BY BRITISH OFFICERS.

A FULANI CHIEFTAIN AND HIS SUITE.

quake, and desolation at a distance of 4000 yards. The horsemen can be enticed into pitfalls, the horses can be speared by the strong and hamstrung by the quick; the Maxim can be reached by the bullet, the spear, and the poisoned arrow — often it sulks and, refusing to speak, imperils a whole brigade; but who can hinder the solemn seven-pounder, with its ruthless 4-inch mouth and its small band of priest-worshippers hidden behind a clump of trees on the distant hill? The Fulani's weapon was the sword; the White Man fights with the earthquake and the lightning.

Not much more than three years ago native chiefs would stalk into the stores of the Niger Company's out-stations and coolly commandeer presents. They would bring a six-shilling sheep belonging to someone else, and select a pound's worth of cloth belonging to the Company. The agents were only too pleased to see their backs at that, and the fear of being raided and murdered in their sleep was worse than the dread of the fever. In those days the rows of firing-slots in the armoured deck-houses of Government ships, now permanent fixtures choked with paint, used to open and shut and be used in earnest, and the Government ships, anchored in midstream with double watches set, were fired at from both banks. Now the store-keeper lets his rifle rust on the nail, the Government ships moor to trees alongside the biggest village convenient, and Government officials are poled along in open canoes, with no protection but an umbrella and a bit of matting, and nothing to fear but the sun.

Only a few years ago slave-raiding Emirs collected their 'subsidies' from limited companies, their 'blackmail' from small traders, and a revolver was indispensable. Now in a dozen provinces Residents from the Temple, the 'Universities,' and the Schools walk about in civilian uniform armed with nothing but foolscap, send an orderly to summon chieftains before them, impose fines, assess

tribute, free slaves, hold provincial courts, and remain seated in the presence of the highest in the land. Just before 1900 the steamers constantly found homeless and hopeless villagers camping in misery on islands and sand-banks, afraid to land on either side of the river until the raiders had gone home to Bida or Kontagora, and even the White Man never landed but in force. Now the greatest danger to the river fisherman is the wash of the sternwheeler as it pounds up-stream, or swings on the flood towards the delta and the sea. Now the White Man goes into the bush shooting in the evening with none but his boy to carry his gun, and has to fear only the crocodile, the leopard, and the bush fire, when camping for the night.

Quite recently the traveller came across village after village silent, black, and empty; but now the hum of one hardly dies away behind him before he hears the stir and tinkle of another. He walks through every kind of cultivation—yam-fields, sweet-potato patches, Indian corn, guinea grain, banana-groves, and, without exciting more than a passing interest, he passes greasy old men, tub-bellied bairns—bright-eyed, clinging to their mothers' knees—painted women grinding corn and making cakes, and lazy fathers growing fat under the power of the White Man. Everywhere he comes across the neatly-tended praying-ground, the little patch of clean sand marked round with stones in the form of a circle, a cross, a star, or no shape at all, on which strong men kneel towards Mecca, mumbling their prayers and rubbing their foreheads in the dust.

It is a wonderful change, and it has been wrought in a wonderful way. There has been no sanguinary warfare, no holocaust, no Omdurman, no devastating of districts, no deporting of thousands, nothing but a few well-planned *coups*, a few marvels of personal dash and valour, a few forced marches, a few minutes

with the Maxim, a few dogged chases, a few quick decisions, a little bluff, and a few shells from the seven-pounders—greatest of all have been the few shells from the seven-pounders.

Once a slave-raiding Emir was attacked by a neighbour, and turned the tables on his enemy by inviting the White Man to bring his famous red-coated Hausas to help him. The White Man came, the enemy made a discreet retirement, and the White Man stayed. In vain the Emir thanked him for his services and offered to accompany him half-way home, in vain he 'dashed' him horses and carriers, and arranged farewell feasts and festivals. The White Man had had his orders to come, and he must wait for his orders to go. Besides, the enemy had fled, but he was not beaten, and so soon as the White Man left, back he would come with double force, and perpetrate all sorts of iniquities and abominations, such as eating human flesh, burying living people, removing near relatives, catching traders for slaves and taking their goods without payment, all sorts of wicked things which the White Man would not allow to happen—no, not even at the Court of his friend. It was a great *coup*, and no cartridges were wasted. It was a great *coup*, but it is forgotten—the shells are not.

In the days of the Niger Company, a British officer, detailed to keep open communication for a force which was going to attack the huge town of Bida, hunted some marauders for half a day, and, coming in sight of Bida itself, was so fired with the fever of the chase that he could not restrain himself, and followed them right up to the gates. His brother-officer shrieked to him to stop; the fatalist black non-commissioned officer at his side told him it was riding into death. Blind and deaf to all reason, he galloped on and disappeared through the clanging gates. The little force under his command hung about; they felt there was no hope, but; not liking

to go away, they watched and waited. No sortie came out to wipe them off the face of the earth, no swift retribution for this insult and folly, but behind the gates, over the wall, the din of battle rose, and, swelling to a mighty uproar, emboldened them to approach, break open the gates, and burst in. The town was in confusion; crowds of natives were flying in all directions. The devil incarnate had attacked them! Rushing to the loudest sound, the little force came in the nick of time on the officer. Covered with wounds, bleeding from head to foot, he was fighting like a wild cat with a native spear snatched from one of his assailants in the middle of an angry crowd of Bida warriors. Saved at the last moment, he hung between life and death on the way down river. He almost bled to death in the canoe, but lived to do yeoman service in the Transvaal, whither, having disobeyed orders, he was quietly transferred. When the army of the White Man reached Bida next day, lo! the town had been already captured and subdued by the rash impetuosity of a fiery young Hercules from Scotland—Bida, the pride of the Fulani might, the great town of trade and countless people, the impregnable citadel with a fighting wall sixteen miles round. This was a brilliant dash, and the very name of the man makes even an Emir laugh uneasily and glance furtively over his shoulder. The memory of it will last, and the name will be handed down; but not so long as the memory of the shells, not so long as the name of the gun.

As recently as 1902 Kontagora, the greatest raider of them all, went on the warpath with a following of anything up to 2000 armed warriors. For a week he harried the land, seized the newly-gathered crops, founded a harem, and made great hauls of slaves almost under the nose of the White Man's Resident. Villagers had come with rumours of the raid; but rumours of raids are rife, and this particular Emir was always being reported to be

on the move, so he got a clear week's start, and with a week in hand he could afford to laugh from his horse at the slow-moving Hausa on foot. It was a glorious week. Night after night the old man fervently thanked Allah for his regained power, for the comfortable booty, the women, the fat, strong, and healthy slaves, the abundance of corn, the herds of cattle, sheep, and goats. Truly the day of the Fulani was not yet dark! Another such week and his following numbered close on 12,000, all inclusive. Then disquieting messages came in of the White Man's force hot on his heels. A hundred riflemen! What was that? A handful! Let them come! Two mornings later, just as the cook-pots were filled for the early meal, just as the favoured of Allah knelt to his prayers, the rising sun revealed the White Man, red and gleaming, coming down the face of the hill. There was no time for defence, no time to strike the tents, no time to eat, no time for anything—but flight. So when the White Man, revolver in hand, walked into the deserted camp, to find the rice still bubbling on the fires and the charred meat smoking on the spits, the black mass was all too plain moving away like an evil cloud to the north. Thirty of the new Mounted Infantry hurried after it, and, approaching the huddled, jammed, and frightened swarm, divided into the bush to east and west. Flanking the flying crowd on both sides, this mere handful emptied their rifles into the air, and the warriors, bewildered by the cross-fire, hungry, half-asleep, refused to fight. Twelve thousand people sent back to their farms, a dozen important malcontents, and the greatest raider of them all under lock and key—a good fortnight's work this for the West African Frontier Force. A good beginning for the new Mounted Infantry, the force which was meeting the Fulani on equal terms, and beating him at his own game. But Mounted Infantry is nothing new, and, therefore, not so effective for prestige as the high-explosive shell.

In the same year—1902—a British column was winding its way towards Lake Chad in single file—the single file of all African travel—when suddenly an Arab force, under an old raider named Mallam Gibrella, rose out of the very ground, galloping up from a hollow in the undulating plain. There the Emir had waited, effectually hidden until the advance guard had passed. The ambush was cleverly laid, and all but successful. Apparently the plain was empty, so gradual were the sloping sides of the hollow, and the military caravan, trailing its length like a serpent, seemed to share the horizon with the flying kite; but within a minute of the scout galloping back helter-skelter with his head down, the earth was alive with Fulani horsemen, and the air resounded with their tom-toms, trumpets, and cries, and the jangle of their metal trappings. Back came the advance guard at the double, and, kneeling among the anthills, added volley after volley to the general din, the growing cries of the carriers, and the shouts of command. Fulani horsemen are easily checked. They form a mass which even the native marksman can hit; but to the consternation of the major, already looking anxiously at the British non-commissioned officer working like a madman at the mounting of the Maxim, and to the terror of the carriers, already dropping their loads of stores and ammunition and huddling in groups like sheep, the horsemen wheeled off to the left and unmasked a dangerous horde of spearmen—mad fanatics whom nothing but a Maxim would stop.

Then did the kneeling Hausas look nervously round to see what the white men were doing, and feel reassured as they one and all seized a rifle and blazed away, for every time the White Man fires a spearman pitches forward in the dust. Nearer and nearer came the spearmen, the gleam of their spears, the whites of their eyes, the soles of their feet. Would the Maxim never speak? Only fifty yards: the line became a row, and each stood out clearly

A British Column on the march in Hausaland.

Soldiers wearing native-made Straw Hats over the Fez.

in the glaring sunlight. At last the sergeant, bare-headed, straddling on the bar, contracted his eyelids, and then—the music of the Maxim, the welcome sound for which the major had dug his nails into the palm of his hand, and screwed his eyeglass nearly to the bone. The 'brrr-rrrr-rrrr' of the Maxim, and the Hausa lowered his 'hot-too-much' carbine to watch. As the wheat bows to the reaping-machine, so the spearmen stooped and lay in heaps; as the steam breaks into patches and vanishes against the blue sky, so the horsemen wavered, turned, and fled, as they, too, felt the pitiless hail. 'Twenty-two minutes from start to finish!' said the major. 'And *he* won't catch any more slaves. But it was a near thing, wasn't it, my boy?' Twenty-two minutes since the galloping scout and the carriers were laughing and sorting out their loads! Twenty-two minutes, and none of the force was killed, but 160 Mohammedans lay dead or dying on the ground, and the vultures were gathering for the feast! Then the chase began. Half a dozen Mounted Infantry, with two lieutenants and a non-commissioned officer, trotted out after the flying Emir. For five days they rode as much as their horses could stand. The trail was unmistakable. One day the wounded, and an old man whose horse had put its foot in a hole; next, fighting men with jaded mounts, three women of the harem, and some slaves; next, more slaves and more women; next, the favourite wife; and then the Emir hiding under a heap of goatskins in a terrified village. It was a terrible few minutes with the Maxim, and it was a grand chase, but it was nothing to 'the Eye of God.'

'The Eye of God'—the seven-pounder landed from the gunboat three hundred miles down river before the Government took the country over from the Company—will be spoken of with bated breath when the Hausa wears trousers and jacket, and when letters are delivered at the

huts. A town was to be punished for breaking treaties, or for catching slaves, or for stealing women, or for murders, or for looting a store, or for what not, and the chief had summoned all his vassals to aid him in resisting the interloper. The cursed White Man had sent a messenger who had been beaten, and another whose head still grinned on the gate; and the White Man's big fire canoe had brought a small body of black men from the Coast up the river. These were camped on the bank over a mile away on the other side of the ironstone hills, sheltering the town from the east, and would attack to-morrow. To-night they would not move, for there was no moon, and, besides, there were watchers all along the hills. It was only a small force, and the chiefs gathered with easy confidence in the palace of grass to confer and consider the plan of defence, and how to teach these coastmen what the inland tribes could do. A good company was assembled in the light of the fire and torches. There was a murmur of tongues. Outside the night was still, except for the frogs in the marsh. The plans were almost concluded when there came a scream, a flash, a terrific peal of thunder, and a frightened chamberlain rushed in to say the bush near the yam-field had been set on fire by lightning. Before they could verify this wonder there was another scream, a blinding light, a terrific crash, the council-chamber tumbled into a ring of blazing sticks, and one of the councillors was shattered into a bleeding pulp. Six times this happened, and the town was a town no more. The flying tribesmen were met by the watchers from the hills, who told of the flashes and reports in the camp of the cursed White Man, and a large tract of country was added to the realm of civilization and humanity. In the dead of night the lieutenant, knowing the position of the town by heart, had shelled it over the hill; and the gun is called 'the Eye of God' to this day.

Later on, further up river, when Kontagora defied the White Man, insulted his messengers, and caught his people for slaves, a force was sent against him. The morning found the expedition on a hill, from the ridge of which the sprawling town could be seen on the plain. Through the glasses the Fulani army could be made out riding from the gates to do battle to the infidel, a goodly troop of cavalry, clad in flowing robes, and reflecting the rising sun from spear, gun-barrel, and trappings. Such a good white mark against the dull brown of the town and parched grass—just the range, too—was irresistible, and the small battery opened fire at 4000 yards, dropping shell after shell in and over the gathering army, two and a half miles away. Hausaland had never known the like before, and no warrior was so bold as to stay and fight the harnessed lightning. Again an expected engagement turned out a mere occupation. Again the stories of the White Man flew, as stories only can fly in the Soudan, striking terror in evil-doers, and causing old men, readers of prophecies, to look at one another with an inner look, nodding their heads in silent acknowledgment of the supernatural.

Great is the White Man, but greater is the gun; greater still must be the White King in London, whose servants the white men are, and who sends for them every year that he may know how they have done his will in this his newest Protectorate. It is meet that the gun should salute the chief servant of the Great White King when he comes and when he goes. It is meet that when the Great White King was crowned the guns should stand in a row and, tended by all their priests, steadily salute him as fast as they could for half an hour; for even the guns, with all their might, are also servants of the Great White King.

This is a fancy sketch. Nothing like it appears in the military reports and despatches. It is taken from the

mouths of the people, from the talkative circle round the fire on the sand after a long, hot day. It may not be exactly what happened; detail after detail could be challenged, doubted, and disproved; but it is what will be handed down to posterity. It is but the skeleton of the history that will go from father to son. It is part of the 'Power of the White Man' in the land.

CHAPTER III

THE FULANI

The Hausa and the Fulani—An ancient civilization—How the Fulani came—First the gipsy—Othman Fodio—A religious war—The Fulani Administration—A prophecy and its fulfilment—Why the people accepted British rule as inevitable—The capture of Sokoto.

IN the Hausa States, up the Niger River, there are two peoples. These two peoples live, not each in its own territory, not each in a distinct part of the country, but side by side, each in every part of it. Wherever the Hausa is, there also is the Fulani; wherever the Fulani is, there also is the Hausa. They are two distinct races, but they live together. In some towns there is the Hausa quarter and there is the Fulani quarter; but even in these you find many of each race living outside the quarters in huts and compounds built next door to one another. They intermingle freely in all the natural intercourse of daily life, but there are two languages. They are only just beginning to intermarry to any considerable extent, so there are two types of faces. There is the flat nose of the darker-skinned Hausa, and there is the straight nose with the Oriental hook at the end of it of the lighter-skinned Fulani. The Hausa is the farmer, the spinner, the weaver, the dyer, the artificer, the hunter, the trader; the Fulani is the organizer, the law-officer, the tax-gatherer, the priest. Each race thinks itself superior, and each race in its heart despises the other. The Hausa tills the soil,

spins cotton, weaves it into thin strips to be sewn together into flowing robes of many colours; spends weeks patiently adorning his clothes with needlework patterns; tans leather and works it up into highly ornamental articles of daily use; hammers household utensils out of tin, brass, and copper; carves gourds and paddles, chips out huge canoes; fishes, hunts, and has the conscious pride of labour—useful labour which produces material comforts for himself. Above all, he trades. He can strike a bargain and get the better of the smartest Arab in the caravan. He travels huge distances with his wares, and comes back to his own land and townsmen with the pride and sense of superiority which only travel gives. He settles down under the oppressor with the philosophy of the man who has been in many lands and has found the oppressor in all.

The Fulani has a different pride. His is the pride of temporal power, the pride of the organizer, the ruler, the pride of education, the pride of the governing race. Even before he had the power the Fulani had the pride—the pride of the gipsy. In the beginning the Fulani in Hausaland was nomadic. He did not scratch in the hot sun in the yam-fields; he did not get covered with mud in the fish-traps; he did not chase wild animals which gave but a poor return for the exertion and risk. He did not sit and work in the dirt at the forge or under the loom all day, or harden his fingers with the hammer, the knife, or the needle, for a small pittance. Lazy but astute, poor but too proud to work, the Fulani in those days despised the Hausa just as the gipsy despises the navvy at home, and, like the gipsy, held aloof, driving his cattle wherever the young grass grew, and exchanging the milk, flesh, and hides of his herds for whatever the Hausa had to offer. In other neighbouring countries races of the Fulani stock may have had power and been important peoples; it may be that round about Hausaland the

THE INDUSTRIOUS HAUSA.

FULANI CATTLE AND SHEEP.

lighter-skinned relatives of the Fulani have ruled for centuries, as some think they have; but in Hausaland the Fulani was but a gipsy a few hundred years ago. Despised and despising, he wandered about among the little principalities and kingdoms, retaliating when he was injured, but never making himself seriously felt.

It was a wonderful country, this Hausaland, a few centuries ago, then at the height of its importance, and it is a wonderful country now. It poured its produce and its manufactures across the desert into Europe when Europe was half civilized, and it pours them into the same channel still. The morocco leather of commerce comes from Kano. Once it was as far ahead of Europe as it has now been left behind. It was once the factory of the Mediterranean, just as Morocco was the granary of Europe. Everything about the Hausa as he is to-day points to a bygone civilization long forgotten, a civilization of which his present arts and crafts are but traces. The patterns of the workers in brass, leather, and cotton are no longer designs; they have lost their purpose, and their backbone is gone; they are but fragments of finer schemes, mere scraps of careful effects, memories of a lost art. But the brazen ewers are not savage any more than the heavier brass work of India, the hieroglyphics of Egypt, or the long gun of the Arab. They belong to a civilization, of the past, it is true, but none the less a civilization. It has left no temples, no pyramids; but, then, it had no lime. Its arts and crafts have been left behind by Birmingham; but, then, it had no machinery. It lived and survived through periods in which the Gothic invasion would have been but an ordinary incident. It was a mighty civilization, and those who built it up were, are now, and will for ages be, a mighty people.

Can we call a people savage which has a written language of its own, a language which is used to-day, and which, after much controversy, is admitted to be of

older origin than Arabic? It has been suggested that it was merely a corruption of Arabic; but that cannot be maintained, for two-thirds of it is older than Arabic. Nor can we call a people savage which has such an inborn trading instinct. The trader of Africa, the Hausa, is found now, as he has been found for a thousand years, from the Mediterranean to the Oil Rivers, from Morocco to the Nile. Everything about the Hausa indicates a past of splendour, wealth, and power. We do not know how long he has been in his land. We do not know whether he is indigenous, or whether he migrated from some other part of the Dark Continent. We do not know whether he made his own civilization, or whether he merely brought it with him from some other land when he wandered into this. We do not know whether it grew with him, or whether it has been taught to him; whether he learned it himself, or was driven into it by some invading race long ago absorbed. The Hausa has been in Hausaland longer than can be traced, and, in spite of the everlasting intertribal warfare, in spite of raiders, in spite of pestilence, has multiplied exceedingly and kept his nationality, absorbing all comers. Like the Anglo-Saxon, he gathered into his stock all the tribes and peoples, great or small, which attacked him or wandered into his land, swamping, absorbing, and assimilating them all—all except the Fulani.

We do not know where the Fulani comes from. He may be a Moor or a Berber; he may be part of the Moorish race which, spreading to the edge of that great empire, wandered out of it. There are distinct traces in Hausaland of Moorish influence; the peculiar spouted earthen water-pot of Hausaland is the counterpart of that used to-day by the peasants in the South of Spain. Or he may be from Egypt. The cattle he tends are similar to the humped cattle of the Nile. The presumption is that he has an ancient history, but there is little in the way of

proof. There is no written language, and the various theories have but little to rest upon. There is nothing but conjecture at the best, and it is as likely as not that his beginning was insignificant, and that he has never been greater than he was a hundred years ago. It is not improbable that he was altogether a nomad, a wandering tribe of the desert. This beginning would not be out of the way; the Hebrew race had no better. Such tribes are rising to-day just as they have been rising for thousands of years; North Africa is not a land of change. A tribe may start to-day in fifty ways. A favourite slave-boy, sharp-witted and strong, learns all there is to be learnt of the management of men in one of the countless mud-palaces of the Soudan. Some small incident may drive him away. A rebuke, a punishment, trouble with a woman, ambition, the spirit of unrest, the death of his master—any of these things may make an Ishmael of him, and send him wandering amongst the villages. There, finding that he possesses a sharper intellect and greater experience than the heathen all round him, he very soon gathers a following, which, once started, if it escapes misfortune, soon becomes formidable. Instead of the runaway slave, you may have a deposed tyrant driven by the usurper from the oasis of his fathers, an unsuccessful claimant to a throne, a rebel, an escaped criminal. You may have a military commander shattered in some great fight (many such men vanished from the field of Omdurman, swallowed up by the desert for a season or for good); you may have a madman, a Mahdi, or a mere marauder. North Africa is full of them all. Quite recently Morocco may have sent several such broken leaders on their way. If the Sultan had been defeated by the Pretender, he and many of his big men might have slipped into the desert, and similarly the Pretender himself might have done the same.

Wherever the Fulani came from, he was not absorbed

by the Hausa. He came and he despised, but he stayed and he kept to himself. The land was good and the cattle throve. The ground yielded treble crops, and so it was with the increase of his herds; and as the cattle multiplied, so it was with the Fulani. Cattle became currency and the Fulani became rich. Then the pride of his wealth increased his contempt for the feckless Hausa. The little States, never united, were ever at war with one another. War was then, as it is now, an expensive proceeding. Then, as now, States indulged in more of it than their exchequers warranted. The Fulani, as a gipsy, kept to the peaceful patches, and there benefited by the surrounding strife. In time the Hausa kings found that more could be got by bargaining with the Fulani than by raiding him, and so, as the needs of the petty principalities became more pressing, the gipsy became the Jew. This he might be to-day but for the rise of Othman, the Napoleon of Hausaland, by whose agency the Fulani, first the gipsy and then the Jew, ultimately became the aristocrat of the country.

Even while Buonaparte was conquering Europe, Othman, his ante-type, was founding another empire on the Niger, an empire which was not to wane until the Germans were on the boulevards. Othman was a Fulani, who, having for some time provided petty kings with the sinews of war, conceived the advantages of fighting for himself and of getting the profits of the principal as well as the commission of the agent. We have only a general outline of his career, but it probably began with wealth, and it certainly ended in power. The Hausa kings, jealous of one another, went down one by one before this unexpected conqueror, and bowed their heads to the power they had turned against one another so often in the past. Othman succeeded beyond all possible dreams. It was a mighty life-work, to come into the world a member of a homeless race, a lender of money, a mercenary fighter

of other men's quarrels, and to leave it the temporal and the spiritual head, the arbitrary master, of a consolidated people, the lord of an empire rivalling that of the Moor at its best. The Moor, conquering half Spain and almost reaching Egypt, ruled a greater territory but fewer people than did the Sultan of Sokoto, whose word was law to millions, and whose power extended from Lake Chad almost to the lakes of the Upper Niger, from the sands of the desert almost to the sands of the sea.

Having conquered, this dark Napoleon, like the white one, set himself to administer. Among his own race he found his material. Everywhere he appointed governors and petty governors of his own people. The officials, military, civil, fiscal and judicial, from the highest to the lowest, all were Fulani. The original Hausa made no objection. Just as the Fulani had dwelt with him before, tending the cattle of the country, living beside him but keeping to himself, so the Fulani continued, carrying on the administration and protection of the country. It was not perhaps to the Fulani mind much of a change, this step from cattle to Hausas—from cattle which fed, bred and fattened by natural instinct, to men who planted, reaped and were robbed, and planted and reaped again; who dealt in goods which did not, like herds, carry themselves about; who hammered patiently at a cook-pot and grew excited over the capture of a fish. But we do not know, for there were no historians there to chronicle every action and analyze every motive of *this* Napoleon. We do not know how much the Hausa was beaten in fair fight, or how far he was outmanœuvred by this master mind, or how much the terrible religious zeal of the Mohammedan helped to extend the conquest even with the aid of the conquered. We know Othman waged a religious war; we know that conversion to Mohammedanism was the first condition of surrender, though tribute to Sokoto was the next. This was indeed a

master mind. We see it in his choice of a capital. The great Hausa citadel was Kano; that was the centre of trade, the chief town of Hausaland, the national meeting-place of the Hausa. Not there was the Fulani centre fixed, but at Sokoto, two hundred miles to the west, a little away from the most fertile land and the densest population. Here the maker of the new power in the land established the religious and military headquarters of the new governing race. It is obvious now that it would not have been nearly so safe to take advantage of the ready-made conveniences of Kano; that it would not have been so wise to station the new power, with all its unavoidable arrogance, among what was left of the old one, among the memories of the departed glories of the beaten race. We see now how much safer the new dynasty was in a town of its own and surrounded by none but its own people than it would have been near the hum of the Hausa hive. We see it now—the Fulani saw it then.

So started the power of Sokoto. How will it end? For years, for generations, the Fulani has kept apart from the Hausa; but as his power has waned the distinction has grown less, until the true Fulani blood is not nearly so common as it was. The blending of the races has begun. The Fulani as a separate race may not survive; but he is not to be spoken of lightly. We must not forget what an advantage to the country the Fulani dynasty has been. The Fulani collected his tribute in slaves, but he protected the land from outsiders; and though he made Hausaland a slave ground, it was strictly preserved. The raider from the sea was kept away, and the Yankee only got the Pagan coast negro for his cotton plantations. It was said that under Othman a woman could carry goods on her head unmolested from end to end of the land, and the same thing is said to-day under us. The Fulani first pacified by the power of the sword, and then established

courts of law; we have established courts of justice first, and only called in force to maintain their authority when necessary. Our task has been, not to conquer the people, but at most to drive out a few unjust rulers; it has not been a conquest, it has been an occupation. And so the power of right is supplanting the power of might.

Without the English, without the light of European civilization, Hausaland would decline and relapse into callousness; but with them it will flourish again, and the Hausa will recover at least his equality with the Fulani. In England we cannot form any idea of the greatness of Hausa trade. We should be surprised if we knew the annual turnover of some of those whom we in ignorance call 'mere native traders.' Trade is reviving wherever the British flag has gone, just as it did wherever the Fulani had conquered. Never in the native memory has the river Benue been so full of trading canoes as it is to-day. With cash for currency, with goods as the measure of wealth, the Hausa will feel his power again, the power of numbers and of production. The pride of the Fulani has been broken, and at last the Hausa will absorb the conqueror. It has never taken so long before, but even the Fulani will be absorbed, and will take, in the history of Hausaland, the rank taken by the Dane in the history of England. The Fulani may not survive as the Fulani; but long before his name is forgotten his work will bear fruit, and in the strengthening of the Hausa stock he will live for ever.

If you moved among the people and got into their confidence, you could lead them on to talk about a prophecy—a prophecy of which you would hear nothing unless you won their affection and respect. But if you succeeded in drawing them out, the people would tell you of something which was and is part of their faith, and it is this: 'On his deathbed Othman, the great Fulani, the

first Sultan of Sokoto, the spiritual head of the revealed religion, saw the future in a vision, and told it to his priests that all might know what was to come. *His dynasty was to last for a hundred years. The sixteenth Sultan of Sokoto would reign but for a day. Then would come the day of a foreign power for four years, and then the Mahdi and the Millennium.*'

It may be that there was no prophecy, but the people believe there was. It may be that the legend of the prophecy only grew as the power of the Fulani declined, but everything it foretold has happened. The year 1903 was the hundredth year, and the people knew it as it came. The fifteenth Sultan of Sokoto died as the year began, and when he died, when the hundred years had passed, the glory of Sokoto had already departed. It is doubtful whether there was then any tribute whatever sent in from the once faithful States. We can well understand how this would be, how much such a prophecy would hasten the end of a waning power by emboldening many to refuse allegiance who otherwise would never dare to do so. When we consider that the waning of the Fulani power exactly coincided with the period fixed by the prophecy, we see how dramatic the death of the fifteenth Sultan was. But dramatic as it was, it was nothing to what followed. With the fifteenth Sultan dead and the sixteenth to reign but for a *day* (a word with a special Oriental elasticity), and with the people looking for the next step, we might—knowing that what a people looks for it generally finds, or thinks it does—have expected something approaching a fulfilment of the prophecy, but hardly so exact and remarkable a fulfilment as actually has occurred.

To explain it properly we must go back and consider how events had shaped in Northern Nigeria for the last few years. As the hundredth year approached, and the age of the fifteenth Sultan increased, the people had not

far to look for the foreign power. There were no less than four—the Senoussi, the Germans, the French, and the English, standing round like vultures waiting for the feast. The struggle between them must have been the subject of much head-shaking among the seers and sooth-sayers of the land. Fate would have one, and there were four eager to answer her beckoning. The English were first in the field, and, having control of the waterways, had the best position, but we did not hold it without effort after effort. The first to challenge us were the French. As we came over the sea from the south and up the river and established ourselves on its banks, the French came over the land from the west, from the north, and from the east.

The natives knew of the expedition they sent to Boussa when they met Lugard's new force of trained Hausas and had to retire. We in England know that the object of that expedition was the extension of their frontier to a point below the Boussa Rapids, so that, by means of a port there and a short line of railway, the international waterway secured by treaty on the river below them might be effectually connected with the longer stretch of navigable river above them. Those rapids made the international waterway a mockery, so they were almost willing to go to war for them, for the benefit of their empire in Timbuctoo. They had not the Hausa States in mind; but the Hausas think they had, for all they saw was that the army of the foreign power from Timbuctoo met the army of the foreign power from the river, and sat down and got the guns ready and thought better of it. The natives knew of the everlasting movement round *Z*inder on the north, where no chief is sure even now whether he need feed the French troops free of charge or not, and they put their own construction on it. They do not believe that the French came all that way across the desert just to sit at *Z*inder. The natives

knew of the rush the French made in 1901 into Bornu on the east, when the man whom Fad-al-Allah had outmanœuvred surprised him in his camp and massacred his following, only to retire as the English column advanced.

The Germans came up from the Cameroons, but got no nearer than Yola, for the slave-raiding Emir there had already been deposed. They sent an expedition up their frontier to Lake Chad, but they did not cross over into Bornu. The Hausas know nothing of frontiers made in Europe, and so would not understand that it was the French dash across the Cameroons in the previous year which occasioned that expedition. They would think it was another foreign power for them; and when we, for the same reason, sent the column up at the same time on our side of the frontier, it, of course, seemed to them that we went there to keep the Germans out. The Senoussi, the mysterious Senoussi, were also coming. They were gathering in the Sahara like the tornado on the horizon. The land was full of their spies, of traders with more money than goods, of drovers who sold cheap and cared not if their cattle died. Undoubtedly the Senoussi were coming, and they were causing anxious moments in Hausaland, just as they were in more than one European council. But at the opportune moment—in September, 1902—the great Senoussi Chief died, and the field was clear for the English.

It was clear to the native mind that there was going to be a change of masters. It was Fate, and no one was foolish enough to try to resist it, except under compulsion. The people were agreeably surprised to find the foreign power so gentle, and employing new methods under which they are getting fatter and happier than they have ever been before. We may congratulate ourselves on our success; but we shall never know how much of it is due to the prophecy. We have gone as slowly and cautiously as if there was no prophecy; but who can say whether we

should have done so well without it? We built a town at Quendon, just under 350 miles from Kano, four years ago, and thought at the time that it was as far as we could venture to establish our base. This town was not even finished when we found we could safely venture to Lokoja, at the junction of the rivers Niger and Benue, and now the concrete foundations of what were to have been the public offices at Quendon are being cracked by the undergrowth and buried in the 12-foot grass, and there is a yam-field where the clearing was made for the parade-ground. We had hardly settled in Lokoja when for political reasons it was decided to move the headquarters to Jebba, 250 miles from Sokoto, where we built a town on each side of the river. Then came the trouble with Bida and Kontagora, which brought peace all along the Kaduna River, and we built a town and railway at Zungeru, 200 miles from Kano. This was only in 1902, and we expected to settle down there for some time; but, as soon as the rains were over, the King of Kano flooded the country with his gunmen, and the discovery of a plot at Zaria to kill all the white men, compelled us to go to Kano, where the people refused to fight against us, and the King's own following made but a feeble show of resistance.

If the general people were by this time satisfied that we were the foreign power, what must have been the feelings of the sixteenth Sultan of Sokoto when his turn came to assume the power which was but a sham? There were British Residents and garrisons established at Bautshi, 150 miles from Kano on the south-east; at Zaria, 90 miles from Kano on the south; at Kontagora, 100 miles from Sokoto on the south; and at Illo, 150 miles from Sokoto on the south-west. These Residents had quietly, but firmly, taken their places, the local Emirs in each case being unable to resist them without the support of the people, and the fifteenth Sultan having

been too weak or too wise to attack them. These stations were bad enough; but the country was full of armed forces, and the air was thick with rumours of victorious expeditions, such as belated tidings of the two companies of red-coated Hausas who had marched up through Bautshi, right on to Lake Chad, hailed by the people as deliverers, and without firing a shot, except once when they were attacked by a slave-raiding Emir, whose force was scattered, and who was ignominiously captured and deported. Then there were the English forces convoying the French relief parties for Zinder, passing perhaps within 50 miles of Sokoto itself. Lastly, there was the expedition which, having captured Kano, was coming on, and the Anglo-French Boundary Commission, which had hauled its stores up the rushing waters of the Boussa Rapids, marched along the Dallul Mauri, and was making straight for Sokoto. What did the Sultan know of the necessity of coming to Sokoto to fix its exact position in order to delimit the line of the circle at a radius of 100 miles from it, which was the agreed boundary? All he would see would be an armed force on the west, which might be as formidable as the armed force on the east. He fled; and who would not have done so, under the circumstances, in the face of the prophecy?

The country is now ours, and it will be well for us to remember the prophecy. It has, perhaps, made us the highest authority in the land; it may, perhaps, be our undoing. Every word of it has come true—literally true—but it has not yet finished, and everything which has happened will but strengthen the popular belief in it. The day of the foreign power has dawned; that day is to last four years, and then the Mahdi and the Millennium. We must neither forget that nor ignore it. A prophecy may perhaps be disregarded if it is not believed in; but it would be the height of folly to disregard a prophecy in which a nation really has faith. We ourselves may

despise it, but that does not matter. We have four years in which to establish ourselves in the land—four years in which to get such a hold on the people that the Mahdi (there will be a Mahdi; there is always a Mahdi), when he rises, shall not be strong enough to turn us out, or, best of all, that the people shall not want him to. We have four years in which to give them something like the Millennium without him. This may seem absurd, but it may not be so foolish after all. We have already brough a new kind of power, and appointed a new kind ot governor and petty governor altogether—a kind taking nothing without payment, burning no towns (except as just punishment for crimes against every code of laws on earth), ravishing no women, looting no houses, making no slaves, and never happier than when settling disputes. When we remember that the Hausas had Mohammedanism thrust upon them, and the distance from the centre of that religion, we may perhaps think it not impossible to wean the people even from the desire for the Mahdi.

CHAPTER IV

EMPIRE-BUILDING

The civilian goes Empire-building—The military mess—Rough and ready quarters—Lack of equipment—Servants—The new world, and its contrasts—New duties—Lokoja and its companionships—The province, and its labours—The work, and its effects on the man—Civilians ousting military men—The kind of men required—The call for men.

WHEN the energetic young barrister from the Temple signs a contract with His Majesty's Government and, in consideration of a salary—part of which it is possible to save—becomes a Resident in Northern Nigeria, an officer of the Supreme Court there, and a candidate for the quick promotion of service in the tropics, he is surprised to find on receiving a list of necessary articles from the Colonial Office, that he must call on a military tailor, and ransack some military equipment store or other for his kit. But, after being a few months in the country, he realizes the immense importance of a uniform—in fact, it is a necessity—for when 200 white men are pulling the strings of government among a people numbered by tens of millions, every unit must be made the most of. If a man be small, he must wear a big helmet and ride on a horse; if his feet be large, he can all the better carry a massive pair of leggings; if he be clean-shaven and handsome, the sooner he loses his razor and has to grow a beard the better.

So small is the number of civilians in Northern Nigeria that there is no club, or headquarters, or organization whatever for social intercourse, and there is little time to think of such things. But all civilians are welcomed as honorary members of the regimental mess—that mess which is never so happy as when its members are going away one or two at a time to get the experience of modern might for which they are willing to risk their lives and constitutions. It is an ever-changing mess: a new president every few weeks; sometimes a score of men, sometimes only three, but, many or few, each man sits down to dinner in solemn state, with his boy behind him. Members come every fortnight—the mail-boat always brings them in—and members go every day, for leave, on expeditions, to outposts, and to hospital. The building is not palatial—merely a small wooden bungalow, containing the mess-room, ante-room, and a veranda. Here the soldier and the civilian, the accountant, the storekeeper, the surveyor, the doctor—in fact, one and all of the little band of white officials can see the papers and read Reuter's telegrams. The news of the world seems very real when it is condensed into ten words twice a week. At the mess one meets with new faces—some white, some browned, some yellow, and some quite pink and fresh from home. Men who have been hard at it all day feel the grip of that strange bond which unites all white men in the tropics—the bond of the knowledge that every meeting may be the last. It is not good to think of that, but it is good to be together. The civilian grows accustomed to wearing khaki and white drill, acknowledges salutes, plays polo, and is helped in his work by all the traditions of the service.

The newcomer soon finds that the comforts of the military headquarters are not much greater than those of a campaign, and that the comforts of the civil quarters are only a little better. True, the houses sent out for

military officers are handed over to civilians, and the soldier goes on managing with his old one, long since condemned. For the civilian has first claim: he is stationed at headquarters more permanently, his work is more sedentary, the strain of attention is less intermittent, than in the camp. Still, a wooden house is but a wooden house in the sun, and much luxury is not possible on the scale the exigencies of ways and means and estimates allow.

Free quarters, furnished quarters, sound very well in Downing Street; but when four have to live in rooms designed for two; when seven must sleep in the hut designed for four; when, away from headquarters, a tattered E.P. tent, a grassmat enclosure, a mud-walled hut, or green canvas tent 7 feet square, are each of them veritable achievements; when in the houses provided at headquarters the tornado hurtles through window-frames innocent of glass for months; when the daily storm drips through the roof; when the Treasury itself, with all its precious figures, has to be hurriedly protected with tarpaulins and ground-sheets; when doors have no latches, tables no legs, washstands no tops, chairs no bottoms—it is little material comfort, though a great encouragement, to know that the High Commissioner himself has nothing better, and the promising barrister weighs his 'poor-quarters compensation' allowance in his hand, and orders out a set of compactum folding furniture from his agent at home.

This follows him round the Protectorate for some months, and next tour he brings a set out with him. So surely as the first-tour man wears his revolver, so surely the second-tour man brings his own furniture. The Downing Street regulations may tell him he will have a bed issued to him at Burutu on the coast; but if there are only ten beds in the store at the time to send down for twelve men, two of them wish they had brought

one of their own. Of course, there may, and there probably will, be more in hand when they reach the storekeeper at Lokoja; but that does not help the five days' journey up from the sea much.

Many a man's first introduction to the country is five nights on the deck. There are no cabins, the beds are set in rows on the deck at night, and he picks up tip after tip about sleeping, eating, and drinking, as to each of which every man, when removed from the levelling influences of civilization, has his own peculiar notions. The day passes quickly, for he does everything for himself, and counts and recounts his belongings. He slowly realizes how much the unnoticed comforts and conveniences of civilization mean to a man, how great a part of the day is taken up with arranging for and attending to the common needs of existence, and he looks eagerly for a likely boy at Onitsha, the first stopping-place after leaving the delta.

Half a dozen come on board, all appearing to his unpractised eye equally undesirable, but, under the guidance of a doctor who has been out before, he selects two. One, a 'valet,' who produces a bundle of testimonials, all earned in a few months, and who asserts that the different names are all his, or, rather, the names which he has acquired according to the whims and wishes of his many masters. And another, whose fingers are itching for the frying-pan, whose yellow eyeballs roll, and who bubbles at the mouth as, with arm outstretched, he gives the list of his possibilities, from seven soups to seven sweets, and seven different 'devils.' The one can fold clothes, clean forks, wash plates, dress a table, and knows all the mysteries of the bath, the razor, blanco, and grease—yea, even that last night's clothes, which are still 'cold,' must not be put on again until dinner-time, and that blankets, pillow-cases, and pyjamas want spreading on the veranda-rail in the sun until they are 'hot too

much.' The other is indeed a jewel, for he can bake bread, knows all about the sour dough leaven, and can make those small cakes which White Man like in the afternoon; he can wash—yes, he can wash, even the blankets, the heavy ones, and 'hirening' is his delight; he also knows more Hausa than the 'valet,' besides a smattering of Yoruba, Fulani, and two other weird, unholy tongues; best of all, he can neither read nor write.

Asked for characters, this one asserts, with frank truthfulness in his happy face, that some 'teefman' stole them yesterday, the fact being that good wine needs no bush, and he could well afford to sell the writings to less accomplished rogues. He also tells his employer that, amongst his other advantages, he is not a 'God-palaver boy,' and that finally clinches his engagement, for it is a lamentable fact that the boys trained in the Protestant missions over there have not, as a class, earned a good name for the very necessary respect due from a black man to a white man. The bargain struck, the 'valet' takes the keys, and a general overhauling of belongings occupies the rest of the day.

For the first time in his life the middle-class man knows what it is to be waited on hand and foot, to have his servant watch him like a dog, evidently noticing nothing but the needs of the new master, who has such a lot of clothes, who has already 'dashed' him a waistcoat, a claspknife, and a piece of red-checked cloth, and who promises him a pair of trousers when the tailor comes along. He finds his bed, bad as it is, better made than it was last night, and that the lad really does understand the 'palaver' of the mosquito-net, how to hang it up and how to tuck it in. He finds he likes having his clothes quietly taken from his hands one by one as he stands behind the funnel getting ready for the night, and he falls asleep feeling that his new life is beginning in

"BOYS" WAITING ON THE NIGER BANK IN THE HOPE OF EMPLOYMENT AS SERVANTS.

A WATER-HOLE.

earnest. Arrived at Lokoja, he gets a bed, reports himself, registers his rifle, ascertains he has three days to wait before going up to his province, does a great deal of unnecessary walking about, and realizes he is in a new world.

A week ago he bumped his head against the machine-made carving of the bathroom dado on the ship; now his bath is heated in a meat-tin, for the store is out of kettles, and he is not yet willing to risk the small enamelled one from his canteen-basket for the furious fire of logs on the scooped sand. A week ago he switched on the electric light in his cabin without getting out of his bunk; now he wedges a quarter of a candle into his folding lantern, blessing the man who first discovered the transparent but unbreakable talc. A week ago he had his soda-water from the ice-box; now he gets his water half cold from the condenser in a cement keg, and sings a hymn to the brain which invented the convenient and portable sparklet. He watches the valet sitting on the ground with his much-scarred legs stretched straight out, happy in a waistcoat and loin-cloth, lavishing blanco on a pair of canvas boots, and he thinks of the neat maid who answers the bell at home. He likes the croak of the 9-inch lizard on the ceiling, shudders at the bound of the ½-ounce spider off the bed, thinks something fatal will happen while he watches his cook bartering for fowls, scolds the valet for killing chickens in a brutal way, eats his new mysterious food with interest, and, after five days on planks, finds a compactum bedstead 30 inches wide, with all its perils, the most comfortable thing on earth.

In the morning a police orderly, in a uniform which reminds him of the inane golf-links, brings him a note from His Honour the Chief Justice, and he walks across to find a younger man than he expected sitting in his shirt-sleeves, with his papers at one end of the table and the remains of his breakfast at the other. Younger

than expected, but full of special wisdom, as the newcomer finds after he has told of the Temple, the ship, and the trip up river. He learns much of the people and his duties, much of the proclamations and the reasons for them, of the scheme of legislation, and the scope and limits of the Supreme Court. He gets a general idea of the line where English law gives way to that of the Mohammedan. He hears much of the native courts, of the nursing of the system of the Fulani, which, shorn of so little, will take its old place at the top, and he listens to a kindly homily on the difficulties and need for tact in the present state of transition from soldier to civilian. He learns much of servants and equipment, of 'chop-boxes,' of simple precautions against thieves, of woollen clothing, of the fatal few minutes in the sun without a helmet, of the treacherous cool wind at sundown, of the danger of a cold bath, of the advisability of dressing every day for dinner—if only as a general tonic—of the chicken-run, the scarcity of vegetables, the danger of unboiled surface-water, and, above all, the necessity of taking things quietly, and of leaving all household details to the boys.

He dines at the mess, keeps his eyes open and his mouth shut, even refusing to sing, which he regrets afterwards; but when the senior officers are playing bridge in the corner of the veranda, he finds the fellows want to hear, so he tells them all he can remember of the latest small-talk and gossip in the week he left. Just as he says good-night he is introduced to the lieutenant who is to command his escort and take charge of the garrisons in his province, and accepts his invitation to breakfast in the morning. As he walks home, helmet in hand, his boy a few yards ahead with the lantern, as he hears the grasshoppers and the deafening frogs, watches the flitting glow-worms, listens to the shrieks of the midnight dancers coming on the wind from the native town in front, turns

his head in the darkness to the monotony of the tomtom on the belated canoe, is challenged at the guard-room, again at the canteen, and again as he passes the Treasury, he begins to realize how thoroughly he has stepped into a new life during the last seven days, and he says nothing in his letters home about the escort and the missing bed.

He has made many friends and earned many good opinions before the mails are ready, and the little fleet of canoes pushes off for the long trip up the Benue River; and, with his boys sitting in glee on the baggage, he sets out on the tedious journey to his province with a light heart and a strong determination to earn promotion whether it comes or not.

There we can leave him. He will 'take over' from the man he relieves, and find so much to do that he will rise before the sun and fall asleep in respectable time after dinner. He will hold his courts and make his tours. The time will pass as time only can for a busy man whose heart is in his work. Everything will not go smoothly; he will worry a little over the first few sentences he inflicts, and wonder whether they were just. He will grow irritable—everyone there does grow irritable—and at times will not be on speaking terms with the officer commanding the station—the only other white man within a hundred miles. He will have fever and get over it. He will get paler and thinner. His gums will be white, his feet will be cold. He will be well ready for his leave when it comes, but will 'hand over' to his successor with regret.

On the way down to the steamer he will read again the official confidential instructions he received on taking up his duties, understanding them more fully than he did then, and he will realize how much the man knows who wrote them. He will leave his boys on board wages with the Roman Catholic Fathers at Onitsha; but they will come down to Burutu to see him off, taking back with

them their boxes full of parting gifts, and a wholesale recollection of the great White Man's canoe—like a big island, full of houses in rows, of the 'big-big bath that you no fill with kettle at all,' and of the wonderful ovens in the ship's kitchen 'fit to creep inside.' He will rest and gather strength all the way home, feeling that the climate and food have affected him far beyond the compensation of the pay; but he will have that greatest of all compensations—satisfaction with himself.

This is the real work of empire-building. A man gifted with abnormal genius seizes the opportunity and starts the organization; but without men, just as without money, the organization will collapse and the opportunity will be lost. Northern Nigeria is calling to-day for men. The country has been in the hands of the soldier for several years; the soldier cannot safely leave it yet; but it is time the civilian made a start; it is time he prepared for the day when he will enlist the disbanded Hausa in the new police. Military administration is the only possible one in the beginning. When no right is recognised but Might, it is useless sending Right alone; but when Might has done right long enough to accustom the people to obey Right for itself alone, then Might's work is done.

When the time arrives for the native to prefer the hoe and the axe to the spear and the arrow, then the subaltern will leave his revolver, coated with vaseline, in his box, and turn his attention to the study of foolscap, learning to explain instead of to command, to summon instead of to seize. The sooner the change can be effected the better, for though at first sight the military organization of stores and transports seems more effective, the civil system will be as good in time, and work on cheaper lines. At first it can only be expected that there will be blunders, for new ideas, new methods, always lead to a certain measure of error and mistake; once, however, the new machinery has been fairly started, the return for money

spent will be greater and more lasting. Under a military administration an army must be maintained, not only sufficient for obvious needs, but for all reasonable possibilities; and if a country is to be governed by undisguised force, the power of that force must never be allowed to weaken—rather must it increase as its influence extends. On the other hand, the civil administration, though needing the fullest attention until it is organized and in working order, will require less and less attention from home, less and less outside assistance as it extends.

Moreover, the soldier would have to be paid from London longer than the civilian, for while the people would willingly find money for the power of the court, they would bitterly resent finding money to maintain the soldiers set over them; this resentment would smoulder for generations, and ultimately break out in open rebellion when least expected. Northern Nigeria must not be the Russia of Africa; there must be no Nihilism added to the terrible secret societies of the negro, and the Government needs no political opposition to make it fully aware of that; but for a civil administration there must be civilians, and for a time they must look to the soldiers for assistance. The people must in time be not so much governed as led to govern themselves, just as in time they must be led to provide the money for the expenses of government themselves. The soldier and the Grant-in-aid are both necessary, and vitally necessary for a time, but not for all time.

The presence of the White Man must be, not as that of a despot, not as that of an owner, but as that of an experienced adviser. The White Man must come as an expert in government, engineering, trade, economy, justice, and finance. There need be no fear of the Hausas not wanting such assistance. True, they will never need labour—the artisan, the artificer, the farmer, will never rear his children there; but for governors,

judges, doctors, engineers, and organizers and controllers of industries, there will be an ever-increasing demand. For those seeking but a comfortable living and a quiet occupation Northern Nigeria is closed, and will be closed until the earth has lost some of its deadly fertility, and until the people live under something like sanitary conditions. But for those in search of a strenuous life, for those who can deal with men as others deal with material, who hold no family closer than the people, who can grasp great situations, coax events, shape destinies, and ride on the crest of the wave of time, Northern Nigeria is holding out her hands. For the men who in India have made the Briton the law-maker, the organizer, the engineer of the world, this new, old land has great rewards—has great rewards and honourable work.

Whether the country be governed by the soldier or the civilian, we must find the money at first; but there will be no difficulty in that, for we are the world's bankers, and we shall not shrink from an investment because the return, though certain, will be slow. We cannot leave this race of black-skinned men to grope in darkness for the civilization which was given to us some centuries ago. London is now, and will for ages be, the busy centre of *bonâ fide* commerce—the Venice of the West. We can find the money and we can find the men. Our mothers do not draw us with nervous grip back to the fireside of boyhood, back into the home circle, back to the purposeless sports of middle life; it is our greatest pride that they do—albeit tearfully—send us, fearless and erect, to lead the backward races into line. 'Surely we are the people!' Shall it be the Little Englander for whom the Norman fought the Saxon on his field? Was it for the Little Englander the archers bled at Crecy and Poictiers? Was it for him that Cromwell drilled his men? Is it only for the desk our youngster read of Drake and Frobisher, of Nelson, Clive, and men like Mungo Park?

Is it for the counting-house they learn of Carthage, Greece, and Rome? No, no; a thousand times no! The British race will take its place, the British blood will tell. Son after son will leave the Mersey, strong in the will of his parents to-day, stronger in the deeds of his fathers in the past, braving the climate, taking the risks, playing his best in the game of life,

> 'So, when the Angel of the darker Drink
> At last shall find him by the river-brink,
> And, offering the Cup, invite his Soul
> Forth to his Lips to quaff—he shall not shrink.'

CHAPTER V

THE FEVER

The danger much overrated—The effects on temperament—Primary causes — Desirable improvements — The Forest Belt and the Burutu Marsh—The poverty of the Administration—The efforts of the steamship companies—The river service—Lack of exercise and ordinary comfort—Insects—Want of sleep—The *anopheles*—Quinine—A tornado—The need for constant care and watchfulness—An attack of malaria.

THE fever in Northern Nigeria is much overrated; it is the bugbear of the country, and many sicken from fright. A few years ago it was a very different thing; the mortality from it was alarming. At one time it made the Government wonder whether the country, with all its natural wealth and teeming population, was worth the loss of officers entailed by its occupation; but in the last few years the death-rate has been steadily reduced, until now it is kept at a really low percentage. Among the chief causes of this is the strong determination of the Medical Staff to invalid and send home every officer who shows himself not to be a fit subject for the climate, and also every officer who, however well he may have stood it for a few years, appears to be getting into its grip. All such men are sent home, where they do not die if they are reasonably careful; and the loss of life is now trifling in comparison to what it was. It is to-day not much more than the loss of life from other diseases under normal conditions in decent climates.

A NATIVE-BUILT HUT.

THE THATCH OF A NATIVE-BUILT HUT.

It must not be supposed, however, that the fever is conquered because the death-rate has been reduced, for the minor effects of it are terrible. It wears men down and saps their very manhood, until the best of them degenerate visibly, and, relapsing to the petty faults of their childhood, become daily more mean, more brutal, more lazy, more irritable, and more unapproachable than they have ever been in their lives. They write letters home full of complaints, of which they are heartily ashamed when they read them when on their leave. Men become cowards over small things. Friends quarrel, and the slightest criticism becomes the most withering scorn. Every act in exercise of authority appears to be partial or unjust, and official correspondence between equals savours of a comic opera when considered from outside. Only when considered from outside, however; for when venomous and hysterical communications about the handling of stores, calculations of allowances, and minor points of etiquette, are set out with every formal courtesy on strictly official foolscap, and solemnly delivered by a grinning orderly to the acting assistant head of some other department, working with his face also to the wall on the other side of the room, the correspondence seems, to those writing and receiving it, to savour more of tragedy than anything else. Every man seems to have a devil in him, which rages at the slightest provocation, and murder seems to wait upon the petty irritations of the household. When men come home and look back, they flush at the recollections of words spoken and of sentences written; they are fit to cry for shame and mortification at the memory of thoughts, hatreds, and passions which ran riot in their minds. It is no small thing which leads to this.

All this is not primarily caused by anything so easily and cheaply dealt with as the female *anopheles* mosquito. It is the inevitable consequence of a mighty nation living

in great towns centuries old, without even the sanitary regulations of Leviticus, of the breaking of virgin soil wickedly fertile, of the 'roughing it'—which ought not to be allowed—of the exposure and poor food, of the disregard of the laws of Nature, and neglect of the rules of health. Men have to live out there under conditions which would send them to hospital in a few months at home, and then the climate is blamed when they are broken up after a year of it. Life out there is about as comfortable as it is in a holiday camp, but a holiday camp in all weathers, and with a full day's work to attend to all the time.

In time and with money there is no reason why the country should be so deadly. Much has been done, and more will be done, to improve the general conditions of service. The old ships in which the officials were moved about are being converted into barges or landing pontoons, literally worn out; new and improved ones are being put into the river service—ships like the *Sarota*, which are more comfortable for passengers, though they will not carry so much cargo—ships which will not draw so much water or run on to sandbanks so often. Marshes in cantonments are being drained. Ground round public offices is being cleared of the terrible coarse grass, which shoots up to a height of 12 feet, and grows again almost as fast as it is cut—so fast that the field is tinged with green a few yards behind the line of labourers, squatting on their haunches leisurely pulling up its roots, under the supervision of a strutting headman. Houses are being taken out and erected on piles well away from the ground; they are even putting up brick ones with real foundations. Building houses there is no easy matter. To us at home it seems simple enough when we know there is plenty of clay for bricks, and that the bush is full of timber; but no one has found any lime in the country yet, so the bricks have to be laid in mud and pointed with cement, brought

out from England in kegs, which are heavy, wasteful, and expensive; and while there is plenty of timber, it is all hard wood, and there is as yet no sawmill, for no one has found any suitable water-power. All the houses until quite recently have had to be taken out ready made. They have often got mixed; and, moreover, it is not easy to fit joints when beams have been floated ashore, or left in the rain and sun for a month. There have not as yet been any wells sunk for deep water, and men are still compelled to take such as they can get from the rivers and surface springs and pools; but condensers are being erected, and though they take all the sparkle and taste out of the water, and sometimes put a little engine-oil into it, no White Man dreams of drinking any but distilled water when it can be obtained, for the erection of the condenser at Lokoja had an immediate and solid effect on the death-rate there. In time the climate will be conquered. Moving headquarters in 1902 from Lokoja and Jebba, on the banks of the river, up to Zungeru, on the table-lands, should do much to improve the health of the men permanently or temporarily stationed there; and as that is improved, the standard of man the Government can persuade to take part in the work will be even higher than it has reached to-day.

In the old days the West Coast was considered so deadly that many of the men who went there only did so because they had to, and to make a fresh start after a few mistakes in the crowded condition of society at home. Some of these men did splendidly, and showed, by their subsequent career, that the very superfluous energy which drew them into rebellion against the trammels of the social system of a more crowded country fitted them exactly for the life of 'roughing it' on the Coast; but many were not strong enough to fight against the terrible temptations to eat, drink, and be merry. Drink marked many a man even before he landed at his station, and

when, after a few weeks more, he succumbed, they said it was the climate. It is so to a large extent to-day. If a man has any inclination that way, his struggle for self-control is ten times harder than at home; and when he once gives way, it is not a matter of years, as it is at home—it is a matter of months; the climate hastens the end and gets all the blame. It is so all along from the time the weak man leaves Liverpool; the difficulties, the hardships, the temptations tell upon him. Then the climate gives him the *coup de grâce*, and gets all the blame.

The ocean steamships have immensely improved lately, but they are not nearly so good as the ones passing through the gentle transition of the Mediterranean to the heat of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, not nearly so good as the ones rushing across to New York, with hardly any change of temperature at all. The change from the Mersey to Sierra Leone is the most extreme and the most sudden, yet the accommodation is the worst. The features of the voyage are heat, stuffiness, and perspiration. Some of the ships are small, and they are often full to overcrowding. There are often three men in most of the cabins, and sometimes the petty officers' bunks are requisitioned. The saloon is always wanted for meals, and can hardly be aired between them. There are often two sittings for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The scramble for bathrooms becomes a nuisance. The passages are full, the smoke-room is packed, and the passengers are forced up on to the top deck. The first thing which troubles a man is the heat, and it comes upon him with so little notice that in many cases a chill constitutes the first attack on his strength. The bit of sea from Sierra Leone to the Canaries is called the 'boneyard,' because, on account of the sudden change from heat to cold, it is fatal to many a man on the way home. Its effect cannot be denied on the way home, for the passengers who are

buried at sea must be so accounted for; but as its victims on the way out are buried on shore, its effect then is not so evident, though it surely exists.

Northern Nigeria has undoubtedly a better climate than the Forest Belt, but to get to it everyone must go through that. The best way would be to run through by railway; but the line from Lagos has only been laid as far as Ibadan, and railways cost money, so passengers have to go by river steamers up the Niger from Burutu at the Delta. The service is not timed with the nicety of the Dover-Calais line, and it is sometimes necessary to stop a few days at Burutu, which is bad, for Burutu is a veritable desert island. The little patch of tide-washed mud produces nothing. When there is any wind the waves lap into the native huts at high water, and the mangrove swamps all round it are more impenetrable than the sea and as unhealthy as anything in the world. Northern Nigeria may be unhealthy, but it is a health resort in comparison to Burutu, where death and sickness make a continuity of service almost impossible. The dangers of Burutu are many—the fever is not the only one. On landing there the new conditions of life begin. The next thing is a six days' trip up river, for which a man more often than not has to find his own food, bed, table, bath—everything, in fact, except the deck for his feet and the awning for his head. There is a store there, but it cannot be relied on for anything beyond what the natives are accustomed to ask for, and the new man finds no chance of making good errors of equipment. Sometimes the store is shut, or there is no time to go ashore to it; then he runs a risk of going on short commons. He may have been advised in Downing Street that he will find rations there, or he may not. If he has, he may find an abundance, or he may not. Stores and articles of equipment are sent down to meet newcomers, but the distance is great, and there is no telegraphic communication. It

is not possible for the chief storekeeper at Lokoja to insure an adequate provision for arrivals at a place with which he can only communicate once a fortnight. To us, as we use the telephone to speak to the man in the next room or the man in Cornwall, it seems incredible that Northern Nigeria cannot cable to her port; yet that is the truth, and one of the next improvements on the list is the laying of a line viâ Lagos or down the river. Without this, the only way to insure thorough provision for arrivals would be to provide lavishly, to arrange for more than could ever come at once, and to keep a good stock on the spot.

It is not possible to do that on the present revenue and grant, for in every single department the trouble is that there is no money to spare over and above what is required to keep it going. The measure of the estimates is absolute necessity, and that also is the truth. It is not that such a great sum would be required to do the thing well. We are rather apt to shy at such items as railways, harbours, landing-stages, and cables, for we know what those things cost on the scale which is required from municipalities over here, but the same scale is not at all necessary there. The railway at Zungeru, which has paid its cost and more in saving transport, is such a one as a contractor puts down when he is building a railway here; a pier there is such a one as a second-class sailing-club runs out into the Severn for hauling its yachts up; a landing-stage there is not such a costly thing as those which are now rotting on the Thames; and a telegraph-line such as is used in military manœuvres would be excellent. What is wanted for public works of this sort in an undeveloped country are temporary accommodations until its revenue is nursed into strength, and can provide for itself permanent ones on the scale, in the direction, and according to the general scheme the development of its present unknown resources calls for. It is a mistake

to make the things too permanent, and it is a mistake to be frightened at the cost.

Undoubtedly the chief danger of Burutu is short commons. Even if the newcomer has been advised of this, and has brought a few boxes of rations and had them sent on board at Liverpool, he may not get them when he lands. The steamer does not come into the roads; it waits over the bar, and the passengers are transferred to an unsavoury little tub called a branch boat, having to scramble over the side, as often as not, up perilous rope-ladders. The trip over the bar in the branch boat takes four hours or more, and, except from the charity of the captain, there is no food to be had. The trip between the two ships is made in crowded surf-boats, and a man gets only such of his impedimenta as he has grabbed for his cabin in the rush of starting from the stage in the Mersey, or has fished out of the baggage-room by the light of a candle and the kindness of the mate. All the rest of his luggage may go on to Old Calabar. Every package which has been put into the hold runs a risk, and a real risk, of being covered up with other passengers' baggage, and also with cargo for all the other ports on the Coast, which the steamer never discharges on the way out. It goes on to the end of the trip, only stopping long enough to pitch out its passengers at each place *en route*, and then comes back along the Coast to unload and pick up a return cargo at leisure, before starting on its voyage from Old Calabar with passengers for home. There are excellent reasons for that system in the lack of harbours and discharging conveniences, and in the urgent need to hurry on with the passengers and mails, and it is not for a moment suggested that any other system ought to be adopted; but the effects of it are too often as disastrous to the health as they are to the comfort of its victims. It is nice to know one has a ration-box, but it is not much good if it is a

hundred miles away, and the food is not very sustaining while it is following one round the Protectorate after coming up with the next mail.

It must be clearly understood that no blame is attributed to the existing steamship companies in respect of the inadequacy of accommodation; they cannot do the impossible. The traffic to the West Coast has enormously increased recently. It has gone up by leaps and bounds, partly because the gold-fields and general development of the hinterlands are attracting more men every year, and partly because those who go now do not stay there so long at a time as they used to do. It has been found that nine months is quite long enough to spend continuously in the strain of the heat and climate. The companies have made every effort to cope with the increased traffic; new ships and better ships have been and are being built as fast as possible, but a ship cannot be built in a few weeks. The demand keeps ahead of the supply, and will continue to do so unless the present interest in the Coast Colonies subsides.

No useful purpose is served by attempting to fix blame here and there, where no reason for blame exists. It may be useful to point out facts which aid the ravages of the fever, conditions which are at present inevitable, but which in time will be modified, if indeed they do not disappear altogether. Just as we had traded along the Coast for years before discovering there was an entrance and lagoon behind Lagos Bar, so we stayed on the edge of the Forest Belt for years before we found that there was a vast people not hostile to us and a fertile land beyond the sullen pagan and the impenetrable vegetation. Having found this, and the French having found it also on the other side of their Tuaregs and desert wastes, we advanced so rapidly that our extension has outstripped all possible arrangements. When things indicated, and others, are dealt with, as time and patience only can deal

with them, there is no reason why the West Coast fever should not lose most, if not all, of its terrors; but so long as these causes and conditions exist we shall suffer badly. Above all, do not let us, having dealt with the female *anopheles* mosquito—if we ever do even that much—rest on our oars and imagine that the problem has been solved. The extermination of this particular insect may be an aid, and a great one. The fact that she transmits the disease is demonstrated, and the theory that she is the principal transmitter of it has such general acceptance in the quarters towards which laymen naturally turn for opinions in such matters that it would be the height of folly to neglect the precautions recommended by science. We must make an effort to keep down the mosquito; but that is not the only effort we must make, and by itself it will not be of much practical utility. No one suggests that the insect is the originator of the disease; it is only claimed to be the chief transmitter, and its extermination alone will not make the West Coast habitable.

If the new man has found discomforts on the ship which brought him across the sea from the Mersey to the Niger delta, on the way to Northern Nigeria, he will quickly realize that they were luxuries compared to the discomforts of steaming on the Niger itself, or of travelling on the land in the interior, or even of life at headquarters. After twelve months' service he will come down-stream again, and sink with a long-drawn sigh of comfort on to the narrow bunk which was so distasteful to him a year ago. It is to the advantage of an Administration to get its officials to their duties, and to move them about from one place to another in the way best calculated to keep them in good condition physically, so that the full value of their services may be secured, and nothing but the positive lack of funds has led to the recent state of things in this respect in Northern Nigeria. It is such false economy to save money in the transport of men who are

brought out on high salaries for desk-work that so soon as the Lords of the Treasury can be induced to take this view of it the river service will surely be improved. At present it is full of hardships, troubles, harassments, and special dangers to the newcomer.

In the first place, there is no possibility of exercise. A man could stamp up and down the promenade on the ocean steamer, or swing his arms under the awning on the hurricane deck, but there is no room for anything of that sort on the river boat. At first the paddles pound away all night, and even when it is necessary to anchor or moor at sundown, on reaching the sandbanks, it is not advisable to go ashore, for the African bush is not suited for a night walk—for humans. The awning is too low to be much protection from the heat during the day, and the panorama of the bank keeps the new man in his chair with his field-glasses. There is a great heat during the day, there is a dangerous coolness in the early hours of the morning, there is driving and pouring rain for half the year; but from all these there is no more protection than there is from insects. The want of exercise, the sudden change from fresh to tinned food, the want of sleep, all added to the general discomfort, constitute a strain upon a man's forces which weakens him more than he imagines, and leaves him fair game for chills and infection.

Having been fortunate enough to secure a folding bedstead and canvas bath from the resident agent at Burutu, he will go on board and begin to learn what a state of undevelopment in the tropics means. He may be rash enough to ask for his cabin, and, if so, will be annoyed to find there isn't one for him, if, indeed, there is one at all. On many of the Government ships there are no cabins. Some of them were wanted so urgently when they went out that as soon as they could be put together they were sent up river to take part in transport work, and the material sent out for cabin construction was left in the

shops. Some of them have lost their cabins in tornadoes —there is a danger of turning over in some of the tornadoes, and such things as top gear are not reckoned of much importance then. The lower deck is full of cargo, natives, wood-fuel, and machinery; half the upper deck—that without an awning—is occupied by piles of kit and black servants, and the rest of it is for the accommodation of Government officials. The part available for them may be 15 feet by 30 feet, and as there are two classes of officials, senior and others, this is divided into two parts. Each official appropriates, with the kit he will urgently need or specially values, a part of the deck large enough to put up his bedstead on, and to hold his feet when he sits or stands beside it. A lucky man secures a pitch which is sheltered, and a wise one rigs up a blanket, so that when the ship runs all night or starts before daybreak he will not get a stiff neck passing through the cold morning air.

There is no protection against insects, and while this may seem a trifling thing to us at home, where the wasp never takes the initiative, and where the hornet and gadfly are almost unknown, it is very serious in Central Africa, where insect-bites often put men on the sick-list for days. The mangrove fly, which is the chief enemy until evening, would be admired for its peacock-blue head if it did not bite like the stab of a penknife, planting a grub every time; as it is, it and the fear of it worry one all day; they say a pilot is excused for leaving the wheel in order to chase a mangrove fly. At night the swarm of beetles, hoppers, and flies of every conceivable size and colour, would be most interesting if it were not so painful and unpleasant. Insects, like everything else in Central Africa, are superlative. From the irritating sandfly to the 5-inch praying mantis and the great clumsy beetle, they are, like Nature at all her extremes, obviously wonderful. An entomologist would be in the seventh

heaven on the Niger; the Government official can see nothing but a nuisance, and stands his lamp in a wash-basin to get a little peace. The water in the basin is soon a slow-moving struggling mass of all sorts and sizes of insects, so thick that those which strike the glass and drop into it do not drown; then the poor man gives it up as a bad job, takes off the towel he has been wearing like a cowl, and slips into bed. It is the only thing to do. Everyone creeps inside his net early, so as to get away from them, and it is policy to put all lights out as soon as the nets are hung up, for the white netting is an attraction, and the sandflies, which are worse than our midges, can get through the ordinary mesh.

Sleeping in a 'compactum bedstead' is a fine art—an art of necessity. The first few nights the new man sleeps on his side, and draws his knees up in the night. The result of this is that his knee presses against the netting, and, ten to one, soon comes out of the blanket, and has nothing to protect it but the pyjama. Then the mosquitoes and sandflies gather for the feast, and he has a rash on his knee which would mean removal to a small-pox hospital at home. He also turns over in the night, and then, ten to one, the back of his hand or elbow sticks out against the net, and in turn receives a rash before he wakes. The bed is 30 inches wide, and it is advisable to sleep stretched out, and not to turn over. This habit is hard to acquire, but it gets easier with practice and as the man finds he needs all the rest he can get.

At first he does not get enough sleep. He must be up at daybreak, for everyone else is, and the morning hours are the best of the day. The boats are generally comfortably full, and it is necessary for all beds to be stowed away early, to make room for the deck-chairs, the folding tables, and for passing about. He cannot get to sleep until long after the lights are out, for, besides the strangeness of his surroundings, the awful heat, the discomfort of

the bed, the scratchiness of the blankets—sheets are dangerous in such a hot climate, and are barred just as cotton underclothing is barred; one must even carefully dry one's blankets daily—besides all these there are the noises. The crickets on the bank are deafening—each one alone is making more sound than its share in creation; but they do not sing solos, and the general chorus is like a field full of healthy corncrakes, and drives through and through the head like 40 grains of quinine. The frogs are bad enough in the marshes at home; on the Niger they are monstrous. If you were to tie a hundred ducks together, and they were all to quack at once, that would be but a feeble imitation of the din they make.

Far more disturbing than either, because of the terror of its association, is the humming of the mosquitoes; high notes and low ones, they come and go all night. No sooner has he settled down than it begins. The noises of the ship die away gradually, until he is quite startled by the occasional sharp sounds of the crew below. These sleep stretched prone on the lower deck, and are, of course, bitten most unmercifully. All through the night, first one and then another of them will slap his thigh as he is roused in his slumbers by one more than usually greedy of the million pests of the darkness, or will kick out his leg in a futile attempt to slay his persecutor. The white men, one by one, cease to wipe the perspiration quietly from their foreheads, and, as the ship grows still, the humming of the mosquitoes grows to a discordant din. The sound of the frogs and crickets is all-pervading, but it is far away on the shore; it overrides, but does not drown the noises near at hand. He can hear the hum of the mosquito just as he can hear the gurgle of the stream round the anchor-chain at the bow. He lies and listens to it, hoping it will drone him to sleep; but presently one rises shriller than the rest, and after a moment's hesitation, after straining every nerve to locate the sound, he

feels positive it is inside the net, and begins a fruitless flapping all over his pillow and chest with a handkerchief. The humming ceases, but as soon as he settles down it grows again, first one, then two, then a few more—he can distinguish each of them—then more than he can count. So, what with these, the frogs, the crickets, and the occasional sharper noises below, the wretched man gets precious little sleep the first few nights of his trip up river. This leads to listlessness and carelessness in general during the day, and a further call upon that priceless reserve of latent energy which ought to be religiously kept for greater emergencies, when, having reached his station, he takes up the duties of his new career.

As for infection by the mosquito, the new man is very careful to whisk his hand about before he makes an opening through which to creep into his bed, and he goes about, for a few days at least, in fear and trembling lest he should be bitten—until at last he is. He sits on a cane-bottomed chair after dinner, and suffers for it, or finds a red anklet tattooed above his boot through his sock. Perhaps he wakes one morning after a bad night to find his net has come untucked, and, kneeling upon his bed, slays some score of bloated *anopheles*, every one of which leaves a red smear on the net as he corners it. He knows that this is his blood, but cannot for the life of him tell where he has been bitten; his neck and ears are all right, his cheeks and nose are sound, his wrists are clear. At last the slight friction of putting on his clothes makes his knuckles tingle and rise up in little lumps all over, and he sucks them, meditatively wondering whether this is death. He often meditates on the mosquito, and wonders whether the scientists would repeat, 'The mosquito, it is the fever,' if they could hear and see her in her countless myriads. He sees every single one of the men on board rubbing ammonia into his ankles and wrists and on the back of his neck, and comes to the conclusion that if to

be bitten is to have the fever, no one will be left alive, and, when he looks at the forest, decides that there is no such word as extermination.

The prevailing opinion is that, mosquito or no mosquito, it is safer to take five grains of quinine a day, and to start when nearing Sierra Leone. Men have all sorts of ideas as to when it should be taken; some take it first thing in the morning, some take it last thing at night; some take it before, some after, some during, and some between meals. It is a sort of religion. Some take it and believe in it, some take it and don't believe in it, some don't believe in it and don't take it, and some believe in it and forget it. Like most religions, it doesn't seem to make much difference day by day. Those who take it at the best time, and most regularly, fall ill if they drink bad water or too many cocktails, or sit with their shirts open in the cool evening breeze, or eat too many curries, or go out without a helmet on; and sometimes those who carefully avoid all these mistakes seem to keep fit without taking a single grain. It is, however, highly advisable for every man to take it, if only as a daily reminder that he is in West Africa, and that he must be careful in many matters which hardly reckon here at all.

Everything is as open and unprotected on the Government boats on the Niger as if the weather were always fine, which it isn't. For quite six months in the year there is a danger of tornadoes, and with them the very real danger of chills. One fine afternoon, when the air is still and the heat rises tremblingly before him, the newcomer is enjoying a cup of tea and drinking in the ever-changing panorama of the bank, as only a newcomer can, when he hears a sudden bustling and the cry of, 'Breeze! breeze! breeze!' He sees everyone around him look annoyed, and start folding up their chairs and tables, and collecting their books and papers, and wonders what is the matter. Then, looking astern, he sees a straight line of

black cloud low down right on the top of the land and of the river, which, lashed into a froth, stands out a vivid white line underneath the blackness. Lightning flashes out of the cloud on all sides, and he realizes at once that it is a tornado. He rushes about, helping his boy to bundle all his loose property—stray shirts, towels, medicine-chest, jug, basin, soap, lamp, razor-case—everything that was kept out handy, and which will pop overboard as soon as the breeze comes—into his big kit-sack. There is no mistaking a tornado; it strikes the stern with a bang, a roar and a seething which makes one wonder how long the ship will keep afloat. The air is full of stinging sand and rain, which, driving parallel with the deck, hurts like hail and drenches everything, and the river is white with flying foam. If the man is very new and has had time, he rigs himself out in his rubber boots and mackintosh, and walks out in it to get the first cooler he has had for a week, until he can stand the rain on his cheeks no longer, and until every drop drives through to his chest. He watches the sailors screaming and shouting as they haul at the ropes of the surf-boat towed alongside, which is bumping badly, and threatens to sink the ship by breaking the waves and swilling them along the deck. He is immensely interested to watch the cook's mate, drenched and gleaming, sprawling all over his precious hencoops and boxes of pans, piled up for want of space on the exposed part of the lower deck. He is amused at the boy's terror at such a little thing as a storm, at his screams for help, to which none of the other boys respond. He admires the way he sticks to his job, and thinks that if he were swept overboard he would cling to his charges until a crocodile gathered him in.

As the storm abates, and the darkness lifts, he turns to his friends to point out the beauty of the driving rain and foam-tipped waves, but finds they regard the whole thing as a nuisance—just as he will himself when he is used to

it—and that they will see him hanged before they come from behind the screening to look at two natives in a canoe which has specially attracted his attention. These two natives are working like madmen fifty yards away, one trying to keep the prow to the wind and the other baling for all he is worth. He thinks as he watches them that it is a slander to call the native lazy; then they seem to collapse, the canoe settles down, he sees them clutch at it as it turns over, and he grips the rail hard and feels quite queer when they do not come up again. He bores everyone with the story of this until the boat stops for the night at a trading station, where he hears other accidents and drownings, only a few hours old, spoken of much as we here speak about the weather; and he realizes what life being cheap means.

When he gets to Lokoja there may be wooden quarters for him or there may not. Civilians have had to sleep under canvas at headquarters many times in the last year or so, though those who can stand that sort of thing in the tropics are few. As the administration develops, better quarters will be provided; at present it is very hard on the climate to blame it when a man sickens after working for a few weeks with nothing but canvas between his head and the sun all day, and sleeping with nothing but a mat between his camp bedstead and the ground all night.

Many men are overworked, for there is a great deal of work to be done. The Administration is much undermanned, and every officer who is conscientious over it finds so much work that he can only keep pace with it by rigid attention; the least lack of system, the slightest tendency to procrastination, quickly put a man into arrear. Procrastination is the special temptation of the tropics. Other similar parts of our Empire have as much work, but in most of them time is not of so much importance as it is in Northern Nigeria. Even if a man is careful not

to waste time, there always seems to be a rush for the mail, and he often has to sit up far into the night at the work, with the inevitable consequences—weakness, exhaustion, fever, and more blame for the climate.

In spite of the latitude, the temperature up the Niger is lower than it is in many semi-tropical countries, and there is nearly always a cool breeze in the evening, which makes the day more pleasant, on the whole, but is in itself a danger in the guise of a blessing, for a man is tempted to sit and enjoy it in a damp shirt after polo, just as he is apt to sit half awake on the veranda in pyjamas in the cool of the dawn, with the result of a chill which may be fatal.

In our other tropical possessions a man finds plenty of companions who are well up in the special tricks and dangers of the place, and is kept well posted as to the symptoms of the peculiar kind of fever prevalent; but here the service is so new that the oldest official is still learning daily, and when a new man has anything the matter with him he generally lets it go too far before consulting the medical officer. It cannot be too clearly impressed on young officials that the fever aggravates and follows, just as it overrides and merges, every other ailment that flesh is heir to; a boil on the neck will induce a temperature of 103°, and a sprained knee turn to malarial rheumatism. Because of this risk, every man is recommended to take his own drugs and study them; but the inevitable medicine-chest often does harm by leading a man to think that he can doctor himself. It is a golden rule to go and see the doctor on the slightest pretext, and though a man may be treated curtly, partly out of irritation at being troubled with small ailments, and partly lest fright should make matters worse, still, it is much better to go to the doctor a little too often than to leave it, as most men do, until he has to come himself and it is a case for a hammock. A new man is too often

nervous of troubling the medical officer, and, above all, often frightened of the hospital. If he has a sore throat at home, he looks up one or other of his friends who are struggling for fame and life in medicine, and he gets a little wholesome physic and advice without feeling he is any older for it. Out in Northern Nigeria there are no struggling practitioners; the doctors are busy with white men and with the natives all day long, and, knowing this, he doesn't like to trouble them with little irregularities. Then, too, he hears of this and that official being sent, protesting, into hospital, and forgets that, since there are no carriages and pairs or dogcarts to carry the doctor to the patient, the patient who needs treatment or control must go to the doctor. There is a great heat in the middle of the day, and, to save the medical staff a little, there is probably a rule that no one shall be visited more than once at his quarters. Anyhow, he sees man after man carried into hospital as soon as he calls the doctor in, and gets the idea that, if he sends for the doctor, into hospital he will go, so puts off the evil day as long as possible, which is bad. Many an attack of fever could be fended off if taken in time.

A man learns the symptoms off by heart and watches diligently for them; but they masquerade in every conceivable disguise, and nearly always come upon him unawares. Something goes wrong, it does not matter what it is, but the system of the body, which has been driving at an abnormal rate for some time, fails at the weakest spot; one or other of the organs ceases to perform its function properly, and the fever is in like a shot. In the beginning the man may go off his feed, and as he has been warned against over-eating by the Colonial Office, which admirably sums up all the lore of the tropics into the one word 'moderation,' he doesn't let this worry him. What does worry him is that his work is in arrear, and when a man lets this get on his

mind he is lost. The only way to deal with arrears is to plod stoically at them; it is not of the slightest use getting anxious. It may be that he needs a little more exercise, and this very worrying about his work prevents him taking it. When there is a good deal of work out there it is easy to get run down. It is necessary to make a rigid rule to go out, say, at five o'clock every day, work or no work, just as it is necessary to make a rule to go to bed regularly, arrears or no arrears. A man makes both these rules every time he comes out of hospital, and breaks them as soon as he gets interested in his work again.

He gets run down, and doesn't know it. Then perhaps he has a pain at the bottom of his chest, under the tip of his breast-bone; it wakes him up in the night, but is gone in the morning. In a few days it is worse, and he feels it every time he takes a long breath, then every time he breathes at all. It grows worse steadily for a week, and he thinks it is something the matter with his lungs, and does chest developing and breathing exercises until he is fit to drop; but it still gets worse. He has no idea it has anything to do with the fever, for there is no ague, no ache in any other part, no dry feeling, no giddiness, nothing but this beastly pain, a feeling of depression, and bad temper. He is quarrelsome, and thinks the other fellows are; he swipes his boy for the first time on the side of the head, much to that young man's astonishment, and he dreams about the papers on his desk. The principal worry at first is that it keeps him from pushing on so well as he would like with his work. Then he loses interest in that, and doesn't seem as if he can bring himself to touch it without an effort. At last, having sat all the morning, from 6.30 to 9.30, at his desk with his head in his hands, he rouses himself sufficiently to send a 'chit' (or note) to the senior official under whose guidance he has been placed for the first few months, to say he is feeling rather seedy, and will knock off and lie down for a few hours.

Presently, much to his surprise, the doctor walks in, takes his temperature, feels his pulse, and tells him to knock off work and lie where he is a bit. He doesn't object to this, and wonders in himself how it is that he can be so little perturbed at the idea of letting his work 'rip' a little. At lunch-time his senior looks in, and asks him how he feels, and he says: 'Oh, nothing, thanks; only just weak and silly.' The senior says: 'I expect you are in for a little go of fever; you'll soon be all right,' and leaves him feeling very calm and pleased with himself. He spends the afternoon quietly feeling pleased with himself, and wondering how this present state of mind has come about. Instead of feeling sorry that he has to leave all that mass of papers on his table, he positively feels as if he were scoring off the chap who comes in quietly and takes them away, with a pleasant, 'How do?'

The doctor looks in again, and asks whether he would like to go to hospital, but he waxes a little angry. There is nothing the matter with him; he is simply a little tired, and is having a good rest, and will be all right to-morrow. The doctor looks at the thermometer again and smiles, then goes out on to the veranda and looks across at the hospital on the hill, and along all the paths leading from it. Then he comes back, and asks if he may take a sheet of paper for a 'chit,' and does so, and goes. He comes back in an hour, and while he is talking about nothing in particular, there is a shuffling of feet outside. Then he turns to the bed, and says: 'I think you'd better come into the hospital, my lad; its cooler,' and the man doesn't mind whether he does or not; he is only wondering why he was so angry when it was suggested before. It is such a silly thing to get angry about anything! So he tries to get out of bed, and falls back on to it; says he is a bit dizzy, and is not sure whether he can walk so far without falling asleep—for all he wants is sleep; but his boy can come with him and see he doesn't hurt himself; and he

giggles—he doesn't know why. 'That's all right,' says the doctor. 'I have a hammock outside, if you can find me three carriers for it.' The boy, who is very busy all this time putting pyjamas and things into a kit-bag, together with the cash-box and writing-case, runs out and beats some up from the servants' quarters and the nearest guard hut, while his master very carefully dictates a polite note to his senior, to the effect that he is going into hospital to please the doctor, and will be out again to-morrow. He is immensely amused when he sees his boy, who looks a little frightened, has impressed two of the soldiers from the Treasury guard. This seems a huge joke, and tickles him so much that he stops on the veranda steps to point out to the doctor, who has hold of him on one side, that he is going to do the thing in style.

He is lifted into the hammock, and will remember that ride to his dying day. Inside there are some blankets—real thick, white blankets, infinitely more comfortable to the cheek than his own brown army ones—and he pulls the top one round under his armpits with a feeling of satisfaction. He insists on having the sideflaps of the hammock left up so that he can see what he passes, and the doctor, walking alongside, puts a stone on the top to keep them there for him. He goes by bungalow after bungalow, with their gleaming lamps and the black shadows flitting about the mess-tables on the verandas and backwards and forwards on the path to the kitchen. He is conscious that each jolly group of diners is quiet while he passes, and his one thought is that they are saying, 'There he goes, poor chap!'—he feels sure they are saying 'Poor chap!'—and the funny thing is that he has not felt so comfortable for a week.

It is a long way to the hospital, and he is a goodly weight. It is dark, and the road is rough; the carriers' feet are bare. He dozes off, and rouses in a few minutes to hear them panting and groaning. One of them will

make a short remark and the others will grunt, and he perceives they are in a state of perspiration. He does not like the grunting at all, and signs to the doctor, who seems to be watching him closely, and whispers that he intends to 'dash' the men a shilling each when he gets there. This he never thinks of again for a month or so, until it flashes across his memory when perhaps the doctor is lunching with him, and then he insists on paying the debt in spite of the doctor's smiling protests —doctors have many opportunities of spending money. When the announcement is made through the interpretation of the boy, the carriers are so jubilant that he begins to think they will drop the pole to dance, or fall down and worship him or something. They start at such a furious pace that he gets nervous, and puts a foot out. This draws angry exclamations from the doctor, who calls a halt to tuck the leg in again. The carriers take the opportunity of hitching their head-pads a little, and crone a monotonous native drone all the rest of the way. Again he dozes off, and rouses as the hammock stops.

He looks out and sees a thatch-covered, low, villainous-looking building reeking of iodoform, and with humanity sprawling all round it. At the tone in which he says, 'Is *this* it?' the doctor hastens to explain that this is only the native hospital, and he is stopping just to see how a rather bad case is going on. He asks what the news is when the doctor comes out, and is told the man is doing well, though, as a matter of fact, he is dead. Someone comes to the side of the hammock and asks him how he feels, and he says, 'Oh, very well, thank you! My chief feeling is that I don't care a damn!'

Presently he is set down gently, and helped into a white bungalow with no partitions in it. A nursing sister in gray, with a wide collar and apron-strings, comes forward to meet him. There is a row of beds with gleaming white counterpanes, and it seems to him a palace of peace and a

real rest-place. He is undressed by what appears to him to be a crowd of people—doctors, sisters, soldiers, boys—all touching him as lightly as fur; and it seems more as if the bed rises up and takes him than as if he sinks on to it. Then he has a thermometer in his mouth, and it is gone again. Then he sees his boy saluting. The boys always salute when they are stirred, or worried, or frightened, or grateful—it is a habit. The boy salutes and is sent away, but comes back and salutes again. Then the sister tells him he must go away, and he wants to sleep underneath, which she tells him is not allowed. He begins to cry, and the sister fetches the doctor, who suggests that perhaps someone will be 'teefing' his master's things, and the boy runs all the way back. The sick man watches all this through the mosquito-net, until, the boy gone, the others quietly disappear themselves. The sister brings him some medicine in a cup—they have run out of glasses—and he doesn't want to take it, and says so; but the sister says he may as well, and he can see no reason why he shouldn't, so does. Then he is very sick and falls asleep.

The next two days are blank to him, though the sister and the hospital boys are busy enough, and for four more he is scientifically starved back to strength. His chart has been good, and he can get up to wash, sitting on a chair by the washstand behind the screens; and washing helps to pass the time, just as his physic and many little mock meals do. He is a cheery patient, and tells the doctor it is absurd to diagnose him for a distended stomach, because he had hardly anything to eat for a week before he had to give in. He reads through the hospital library, choosing the millionaire and detective stories first; and he makes a resolution to send out a small case of Jules Verne, Anthony Hope, and H. G. Wells as soon as he gets home, by which time he has forgotten all about it. When it is all over, and after a final after-

noon tea on the veranda, he is let out; the sister tells him he has paid his 'income tax' very well, and will probably prove a good subject for the climate. He walks to his quarters, feeling it is good to be alive again, and all the boys about the place seem real glad to see him—they show these things more than white men do. He forms a poor opinion of the fever, and thinks it is much over-rated; but he has it again several times before his leave is due, and, with everyone else in that service, thinks he is lucky if he is not invalided.

It is not so much the fever as the dread of it. In itself it is not painful—more a losing of all interest in everything than anything else. It is deadly, but it is losing ground fast. A few years ago the death-rate in Northern Nigeria was alarming, now it is hardly 3 per cent., accidents included. The condensers have done much, precautions against mosquitoes may have done something, and as time brings its improvements to increase the comforts and lessen the inconveniences of the pioneers of our Empire there, even malarial fever will lose its terrors, and other diseases will get a look in. Then we shall think the improvement is all due to our science, our new theories of medical treatment, and to the latest drugs, when it will really be due to the altered conditions of service. We shall sink wells for pure water, and do without the heavy expense and constant labour of the condensers. We shall live in decent houses, with punkahs, ice-machines, and scientific ventilation, so that they will not get so hot when the sun is up. We shall have better servants and better food. In short, we shall be enabled to build up our constitutions to resist the fever. When we do that we may snap our fingers at it and all its causes; until we do that we shall be its victims, whether it comes by foul air, bad water, tinned foods, mists, chills, or mosquitoes.

It may be that if the mosquito is exterminated, there

will be less malarial fever. It is authoritatively claimed that the transmission of the disease by the female of the *anopheles* species from an infected to a healthy person has been scientifically demonstrated; and it may be that science will not in time prove so fallible in this as it has done in the case of Dr. Koch's cure for consumption and M. Pasteur's lymph for hydrophobia. But, however this may be, it will never do to relax any possible health and sanitary precaution; it will never do to neglect the observance of the rational laws of health. These can no more be ignored with impunity in Africa than they can in Europe; and however many special dangers are discovered and dealt with, the greatest good, the best return, will always come, there as here, from doing everything possible to foster and protect the *vis medicatrix naturæ*.

CHAPTER VI

SLAVERY

Musa the interpreter—How he was found—How he learned so many tongues—His place of origin—His mother, his playmates, and his father—The slave raid—His mother's flight—Kidnapped—The Delta folk—Infanticide and fighting—Flight and recapture—A domestic slave at Lokoja—Raided from Bida—Caravan work—Deserted to die—Delirium and the White Man.

MUSA was the interpreter at Government House, Zungeru, the White Man's new capital, built in 1901, away up the Kaduna River in Northern Nigeria, and he wore red braid round his cuffs by virtue of his office. He had been found in the old dry watercourse called the Dallul Mauri by the escort accompanying a Commission which was engaged in delimiting the boundary between British and French spheres of influence round Sokoto. They had come across him sitting in a delirious condition playing with the cloth pieces out of a bale which he had torn open; he had an ankle the size of a leg of mutton, and the prevailing opinion was that he had stolen the bale and been bitten by a snake in his flight. The only other thing near to him, unless a few vulture's feathers could be reckoned anything, was the carcass of a hyena in an advanced state of decomposition. They had put him on a horse, and he had recovered the use of his foot and his reason by the strength of his constitution and process of time. He recovered his reason first, and was

useful to the column as an interpreter before his foot would allow him to walk. This usefulness was discovered when the interpreter attached to the little force had to confess he could make nothing out of the pagan tongue of some chance wanderers. Then Musa talked to the strangers, talked to them fluently, and so enabled the soldiers to find water when it was needed most urgently.

Musa may not have been acquainted with every tongue in the land, but he was never known to have been at a loss; so in time his repute reached Government House, and he earned the promotion which, more even than the bale of cloth, made him a happy man. He spent his day 'on duty,' sleeping in the shade under the supports of the wooden bungalow in which the Governor lived and worked, and when he was roused by a clerk to interpret the words of the messengers of the various kings and lesser personages who sent to lay complaints before the greatest white man of them all, then, as he stood on the steps, turning first to the bushmen standing in the sand, and then to the Private Secretary sitting on the veranda, he felt he was a very important personage indeed. He worshipped the White Man, for he had never known such comfortable service, and he had known many masters. How else could he have acquired his many tongues? For Musa could neither read nor write—no, not even Arabic. The Private Secretary had urged him to learn to read, but he had shaken his head, and said, 'I no tink, sah. Plenty Mallam live, sah,' which, being interpreted, meant that he did not think there was any need for him to take that trouble, since there were always plenty of good priests of the Prophet about to tell him of anything useful contained in 'books.' He had picked up his knowledge of the languages as he passed from service to service, for if at any time he and his new master did not speak the same language at first, it was hardly to be expected that the

master would learn Musa's, so Musa had to acquire a new one from the other slaves about him. Musa had served many masters, and what he did not know about slavery was not worth knowing.

His 'place of origin,' according to the official record of his engagement, was somewhere up the Benue River, and his parents in all probability lived in the blackest darkness of paganism. He himself had a dim recollection of the village at the base of a hill in which he was born, and of the great river which he used to see winding right away out of sight on the plain below whenever his mother carried him with her up to the top of the hill. He had a distinct memory of the softness of his mother's back, in which he would sometimes bury his nose for hours when she took him to the neighbouring market strapped closely astride of her hips, just as he had a distinct memory of the warm fur of the dogs he and other children used to roll and wrestle with in the village, until it was one great heap of black babies and yellow pups; and also of the many great gatherings in the firelight, when men would dance and kick one another in the cheek, until he fell asleep, and it all faded away, and he found himself in the hut next morning. All this he could remember, though faintly, just as he could the carrion vulture which made that deep pit in the calf of his leg one day when he was playing in the heap of rubbish behind the hut, just as he could remember toddling down to the pool with his sister, and watching her wash the family calabashes.

He remembered vaguely the huge meals he ate, and how his brothers taught him to dig his fingers into the bowl of boiled rice so as not to bring them away with any of it sticking to the back of his knuckles, and how to work the mouthful he had extracted into a ball with his thumb before popping it in between his teeth, so as not to dirty his lips. One day, when he cried because they ate faster than he did, they fell upon him with shouts of laughter,

filled his mouth full of the soft mess, and plastered it all over his face until the pepper in it made his eyes hurt, just the same as his fingers did when he had foolishly picked up a fire-stick by the wrong end—he could well remember how the lump of rice which seemed to go down his throat the wrong way choked him, and gave him a hard pain which hurt for a week.

His father would come in with a brown cob deer on his head, with its feet tied together, so that it was a round ball of fur, and Musa would squat down and watch him hang it on the door-post, cut the skin away and pull it over until he cut the feet off. Sometimes his father would give a great shout, and take him up by the ankle and swing him until the ground would go away below him and up behind him while he was whirled round, until it would all be a blur and he would find himself clinging to the great pagan's side, with everything wobbling round slower and slower until it was still again. Sometimes he would be angry and bite when his father pinched him, and he would then be thrown up on to the thatched roof to cry himself out and be taken down by his mother.

He remembered how, when the men had brought in all the stuff from the farms, and were just beginning to spend the day sleeping and the night in dancing and getting drunk, a man from a village near by ran into the firelight with his face cut all down the cheek, one eye gone altogether, and a big red slit in his chest. And how his father snatched up a spear, and how his mother picked him up quickly and ran like a rabbit into the bush and away along the side of the hill, and how she hid with him for a week in a hole between two rocks. He remembered how carefully she covered it all up with thorns, and did not give him much to eat, and hurt him badly when he wanted to cry. How, one night, he heard a great noise and ran outside, and how he saw her playing with a big hyena, just as he used to play with the dogs in the

A Child strapped on its Mother's back.

A typical Market-place.

village. How he ran and took hold of its leg and laughed. How his mother let go of the hyena with one hand for a moment and swept him away, so that he hurt himself against a rock, and cut his lips and broke some teeth. And how, as she did this, he saw the hyena's tooth slip round her arm like a stick marking a pattern on the outside of a bowl of soft rice, and how red the blood was. How he sat up, forgetting all about the pain in his mouth, when he heard the beast snarl and knew it was no play; and watched his mother take the hyena by the throat with both hands and with her teeth as well, and roll over on to it and hold it down there until at last she got up and wrapped her 'cover' tightly round her arm, while the beast lay still. And how she sucked its blood and ate a piece of its leg quickly, all raw as it was.

When they went back to the village, it was all black and the roofs had gone off the mud walls. And there was no one about but more carrion vultures than he had ever seen before in his life. The people came back slowly, but not all of them; and his mother went to live at another hut with a man who never swung him round by the foot. Two of his playmates came back, but none of the great crowd of others ever did, and he used to wander about in the bush, and down by the river, looking for the others and calling them, but never found them.

Then he remembered how, one day, when he had wandered down to the river bank, he saw a lot of children and some strange men all together, and the men were beginning to make a fire. And how he ran along, thinking that perhaps these were some of his lost playmates. And how the men looked up at him, and then at one another, and said 'Hhuh!' and he was afraid, and turned to run away. And how they caught him and bundled him into the canoe, and made all the other children get in as well, and pushed off in great haste, and paddled hard, although they were going down-stream. And how

they never stopped that night nor the next day, but cooked all the food on a fire on some sand in the stern of the canoe. And how it was the biggest and finest canoe he had ever seen—big enough for a donkey to stand in it crossways—and was nearly full of children of about his age who couldn't talk so that he could understand them. And how they used to play all the same whenever they landed for a time on a sandbank, and used to wrestle and roll about just as the other children in his village did. And how they all learnt new names for this and that from one another as they sat in the canoe. How they were many, many weeks going down the river to the Delta, but were well fed and as happy as the day was long all the time.

That was about all Musa could ever remember of his origin. When that canoe-load of children reached the Delta they separated, being sold to various foster-parents. Many and many a canoe-load of kiddies used to drift down-stream in those days, for it was the custom with most of the Delta folk to kill their own offspring at birth, to save the trouble which babies are for the first few years, and buy them ready-made, so to speak, from the merchants engaged in this profitable traffic. Musa had a good time then for several years, and would no doubt have developed into a good subject of the Niger Company, but before the Company reached him the tribe of his adoption fell foul of its neighbours, and, after a good deal of fighting, which in itself delighted his young soul, he lost consciousness from loss of blood from many wounds in the middle of a terrific hand-to-hand struggle for possession of a neutral fleet, and the enemy paddled away with his body in the bottom of one of the captured 'dugouts.' When they reached their own moorings, Musa happened to move as he was being heaved overboard for the crocodiles, so they took him up with them and made him work harder than he liked for the best part

of a year. Then he ran away, stole a canoe, and found his way through the creeks up into the Niger itself. There he was caught by a merchant who was going up-river with a goodly fleet of his own, and, after being bought and sold many times round that district, and learning in consequence many tongues which were useful to him afterwards, he drifted, before he could yet be called more than a youth, into the possession of a well-to-do Hausa farmer at Lokoja, whose men taught him agriculture.

He was at this time sharper than most, and, becoming a favourite, acquired all the rights and status of a domestic slave. He was still a slave, but hardly more one than the peasant of Ireland is by force of circumstances, not so much one as the serf of Russia is by the social arrangements in his land. After all, the system of domestic slavery in Hausaland is, in the main, nothing but an excellent provision of a scheme of rights, duties, and obligations between men and their illegitimate offspring. In Great Britain the relationship is, or is supposed to be, so rare that the rough-and-ready procedure applying to the maintenance of pauper relatives is considered sufficient in our social scheme; out in Hausaland there is a vast difference. There, where every man may have three proper legal wives, and it is considered the height of respectability to have a large number of concubines, the relationship, which is so unimportant here, is a very great problem indeed, and, in its system of domestic slavery, the Mohammedan law has made an excellent effort to deal with it.

The son of a concubine belongs to his father, not as a slave, but as a member of his household, and owes the same obedience to him as a legitimate son; if beaten without cause, he can appeal to the Alkali, and if cruelty is proved may be declared free. He is a servant, but a servant of the household; he has the same opportunity of picking up

an education as his more legitimate brother. When he grows older he has to work for the head of the household, but only until eleven o'clock—that is, for half a day—for no one works while the sun is high ; after that his time is his own, and he may use it or waste it as he likes. He may claim a plot of land and cultivate it for his own profit ; he may do any kind of work he likes in his own time, and the profit is his own. If he likes to work, if he neither wastes his time nor gambles away his earnings, he may very soon save enough to purchase his freedom and become a free man amongst free men—the price is fixed ; further, if the head of the household sells him, or attempts to sell him, or even threatens to sell him, he is free. Is this not enough to show that the system of so-called domestic slavery may, perhaps, be a better one than our own system of paying such a sum as 2s. 6d. or 5s. a week to the mother if we cannot, with the aid of our money and the shame of our society, wriggle out even of that? We do in many cases wriggle out of it, because the law is weak even here, and we can easily understand how, in Hausaland, when the power of the Fulani, the governing race, had been waning for years—not, mark you, broken by us, but undermined by the weakness and folly of the Fulani themselves, when the Alkali did not hold his court, or held it without responsibility to anyone, and only then as a means of enriching himself, there were great abuses, and it was as hard for a domestic slave to obtain his rights under the law of the Mohammedan as it is for a poor man to obtain his in the Courts of Chancery. This was one of the wrongs the White Man went into Hausaland to right, and in the establishment and supervision of the native courts alone his presence is more than justified.

Unfortunately for Musa, at that time the White Man had not yet reached Lokoja, except in an occasional steamer, and he did not then make his acquaintance,

though, his head being full of the wonderful tales he had heard of his power, he used to hang about amongst the trees whenever he had a chance of watching him trading with the great men of the place on the beach. He met many boys who had worked for missionaries at different places down-river, and heard so many stories of the great 'ju-ju' of the White Man, especially from one who had deserted from a trading ship, that he was seriously contemplating a change of masters, when Fate unkindly provided him with one of a different sort. One night there was a glare at the top of 'Patti,' the tableland enclosing the town in its two arms, and Musa, together with other farm hands, was gathered in by the raiders from Bida. Musa did not show fight, for he had learnt the Mohammedan law, and knew that as a recognised domestic slave he was safe. But when he got to Bida he found the Alkali to whom he wished to complain was too busy to hear him, and, as he sulked and refused to learn a trade in one or other of the busy booths, he was made into a common carrier. He might easily have had a better lot, but he sulked. He felt that Fate was not treating him fairly, and, as a result, he came in for more blows than his share. However, he was strong, the load was nothing to him, and, after all, he might as well be walking about as sitting still in a strange land. He and the other carriers in the caravans to which he was attached found plenty to talk and laugh about when, their troubles all forgotten, they sat round their fires at night, and he did not have such a bad time, on the whole.

Then the White Man came to Bida, and Musa was hurried away towards Sokoto, where his life was anything but pleasant for three long years. There were fewer slaves, and the masters, by way of making the most of them, worked them to death. There was no source of fresh supply—the White Man saw to that—and the ones left got less food and more blows in proportion as the

amount of work required of them increased. Musa would have run away, but he had done that once before without much success; and that was on the river which he had been, so to speak, bred on. There, in that dismal land, where it was cold at night, he decided, with very little thought, that running away was folly not to be entertained for a moment. However, it is when the darkness is blackest that the first dawn appears in the East, and Musa's release dated from the moment a scorpion stung his foot. One of the other slaves doctored it for him, but there was no time for that sort of thing, and it still hurt him badly when he had to hoist his load and limp along with the others as well as he could. He lagged behind at the tail of the caravan all day, and hardly noticed the whip of the headman, the pain was so bad in his foot. At last he stumbled and fell, and the headman, having already noted his foot was incurable, took no more notice of him than to send one of the others back to take his load of stolen cartridges and leave in its place the least valuable bale of cloth, for every man was fully burdened, and the loss of a man meant the loss of a load.

Musa could never tell how many days he lay in the Dallul Mauri; he never thought of it without a shudder. He slept a little the first night, from sheer exhaustion; it was restless sleep, and the pain in his foot woke him several times. When the sun rose he dragged himself to the discarded bale, and, tearing it open, covered himself with some of the cloth, for shade. Then he grew hungry and thirsty, and felt that he must die, for his foot was so bad that when he tried to get up he fell back with a scream. He felt he must die, and presently heard the *whis-whis-whis* and *bump-bump-bump*, as the first little carrion vulture landed on the sand fifteen yards away. This one walked about and watched him quietly, and presently others came; there were many there before long, and they started quarrelling amongst themselves.

He was hungry, and pretended to be dead. The birds came closer and stalked away again, only to come back closer still. Then one, more venturesome than the rest, rushed at him, and he grabbed it, but only tore out a handful of feathers, and the whole lot of them went sailing away as the sun sank and it was dark.

The moon came up, and with it the hyenas—five of them. Then it was that the memory of the scene outside the hole between the rocks on the hillside away up the Benue River flashed across Musa's mind, and he lay stiff and still. For a long time the beasts sat and walked round and watched him, but at last one came snuffing quite close. Musa grabbed one of its paws, and—well, he could always show the marks on his forearm where the brute gripped him in turn. That was a fight for life, and a few teeth-bites more or less on the arm were nothing to Musa. The other brutes kept their distance, and before very long Musa was eating raw hyena, just as his mother had done twenty years before. But the sun was hot, and the next thing Musa remembered of that worst of all times was jogging along on the back of a horse belonging to a white man in a khaki helmet and riding-breeches, who was walking alongside.

Musa knew a lot about slavery. One day, when he overheard one of the punkah boys, who had been judiciously whipped for stealing a tin of lard out of the store-room, holding forth to the other household servants on the cruelty of the White Man in general, and the hardships of Government House service in particular, he walked into the group, and, catching the fat youth by the ear, said: 'You be one big fool, you! If de White Man no come, you be slave and carry brick for de Fulani all day. You no savvy dat? You be one big fool!'

CHAPTER VII

ENGLAND AND THE BLACK RACES

Protest against belittling of England by Englishmen—Ignorance no excuse — Missionaries unfairly attacked — Should the trader govern?—False accusations against the Administration—French and English methods compared—Vital circumstances favouring the English and hampering the French—Six lesser matters—English militarism examined — Actual military operations — Summary.

IT is difficult for anyone who has lived on the fringe of the Empire, where it is growing and extending its influence for progress and civilization, to read without indignation some of the articles appearing from time to time in magazines, reviews, and newspapers, running down the work being done by the fellow-countrymen of the writers, who are steadily and brilliantly building with their very lives a future for the nation to take if it will. It speaks wonders for our racial phlegm that objection has not been taken to this belittling of England by Englishmen, this hindering of labour by those who keep away from it; it is a matter for wonder that those who have been on the spot have not raised their voices in protest against the weird mirage of militarism portrayed by those who sit at ease at home, and might, from all one can see in their writings, gather their knowledge of the subject from the hostile press of Paris. If they only knew something of the work being done out in Northern

Nigeria, they would lend their pens to help, not hinder, the efforts of those who are daily risking their lives, ruining their health, shattering their constitutions, in the cause of freedom, justice, and humanity. It is no excuse for them to say they have no information; it is not for those who do the work to seek out the writers at home and tell them about it. The work is all done at high pressure, and must of necessity be so in a climate so deadly that not to have one's heart and soul in one's efforts is to succumb. The present lack of revenue means that the Administration is much undermanned, and every death makes the labour harder for those who survive. A Resident has no time to make reports to pressmen; when one day's work is ended he needs all the leisure he has for sleep and recuperation for the next. Nor is it practicable for a man in the thick of it, taking part in it, to stop and expatiate on aims, methods, and measure of success. The distance is so great, the country is so undeveloped, that the pressmen cannot go and take their own observations. For the same reasons they must not expect to be kept informed; but because they are not informed, they are not justified in writing anything which may tend to damage our national prestige, still less are they justified in calling into question, without the most careful inquiry and the clearest evidence, the administration of those who have been entrusted by His British Majesty's Government with the interests of the nation in this great country.

Writers who have nothing to do with the country themselves attack indiscriminately all who have. Even the missionary does not escape accusations of political, economic, and literary iniquities. When Mr. E. D. Morel,* who knows perhaps about as much as anyone

* 'On the other hand, we find in the works and letters of prominent missionaries engaged in the West African field egotistical essays of the following description: "Care must be taken that the waterproof cloak is *stitched*. Sponges, bath towels, etc., will suggest themselves.

of the affairs of West Africa, has a playful dig at the literary productions of the missionaries, he may be forgiven. But he would have refrained had he realized how hard it is to take criticism in a playful spirit among the thousand and one petty annoyances of the undeveloped tropics; he would have struck out from his proofs all sarcasms directed against the chatty paragraphs in their letters home—God knows what an effort it is to be cheerful out there!—or against the discussion in their reports of mere minor matters, such as food and simple remedies for those disorders of the natural functions of the body which are inevitable in such a climate, and the importance and worry of which no one unacquainted with them can realize. Little matters of diet and household arrangements are small, and may seem paltry to the man

Do not forget the table linen; a neatly-arranged table helps to tempt the appetite, which is often fastidious. Antibilious compounds are worth, in my judgment, *two guineas* a box." The above passage is derived from a book recently published, written by a missionary with nine years' experience in West Africa. The articles mentioned by the writer are recommended by him as indispensable to the welfare of a teacher of the Gospel in West Africa. The following is a typical passage culled from the epistolary effusions published from time to time in the organ of the Church Missionary Society from the pen of a most energetic bishop, who has been endeavouring, with singular ill-success, and not without some danger of arousing disturbances, to evangelize the Hausas: "We are all well. . . . Our appetites are enormous. We have plenty of food. We receive presents of food from the people every day—rice, onions, corn, maize, fowls, bananas, etc. B—— shoots a good many partridges and guinea-fowl, and we have a good reserve of European and English stores." That these little peculiarities do not in the slightest degree detract from the sincerity of the writers may be accepted without reserve. All we are here concerned with is to consider the general effect which these conceptions of the methods of propagating Christianity in West Africa are likely to have upon the African. Are men who profess so tender a regard for their well-being calculated to make much headway in an evangelical sense? It may reasonably be doubted' ('West African Affairs,' by E. D. Morel, 1902, pp. 233, 234).

walking along the paved street here; but there, where there are no shops, and where the strain and stress on one's constitution are immense, they attain proportions which have to be experienced to be understood.

If it were only Morel's book none could raise any objection; but when other writers carry the matter further, without the information necessary to tell them where to stop, the limits of fair criticism are, as one would expect, exceeded. One need not be a friend of missionaries to wonder what sort of taste it is to accuse them as a class of desiring to extend the kingdom of Christ by fire and sword, to accuse them, as some have done in solemn London reviews,* of being 'the most enthusiastic advocates' of 'resort to force,' and of conniving at the breaking up of the temporal power in the land because the spiritual authority will be broken with it. One need not be an admirer of missionaries to think more of their intellectual capacity than to approve of the suggestion also made that they prefer a state of anarchy rather than an established Government in order to secure a clearer field for their endeavours for Christianity. There may be missionaries who are bigots, there may be missionaries who are fools, but it is scandalous that they should be attacked in this way as a class, for as a class they do not desire war, bloodshed, or any kind of compulsion whatever.

These writers attack everything and everyone—missionaries, officials, soldiers—and then, seeking an ideal, fasten, Heaven help them! on the trader. They forget, or pretend to forget, that all the evils of the West Coast to-day are the leavings of the administration of the trader. It is the trader who has had all the voice in the management of our West Coast Colonies until recent years. It was the trader who carried on the shameful human traffic. The one and only object of the trader is profit, and, as a class, he does not care much what he trades in so long as

* *E.g.*, Mr. Stephen Gwynne in *The Fortnightly Review*, March, 1903.

he gets that. It was the trader who sat in his fort on the coast, and, while the other nations secured lasting interests in the hinterland, was content to collect commodities from the caravans of slaves, and give in return powder, guns, beads, gin, and gin again—anything that was cheap. If we want to see the ideal government *by* the trader *for* the trader, we have only to look at the Congo. The great idea of many British officials may, as alleged, be promotion; it may be that some of them care only for themselves and nothing for the people; it may be that all of them are actuated mainly by ambition; but ambition is not such a grievous fault as greed, and promotion is not so terrible as monopoly. On the Congo the trader is supreme, and we are beginning to know the result. In Northern Nigeria he is not; but even there we have had monopoly. Left to himself, the trader develops monopoly as surely as the Arab develops slavery. The modern history of the Niger has been a long and ruinous struggle against monopoly, ruinous to the people, ruinous to the trader, ruinous to the trade. The practical monopoly of the Niger Company can be explained, but it cannot be defended. Let us, therefore, remember monopoly. The people want protecting, and they shall be protected, not only against outsiders, not only against their rulers, not only against themselves, but even against the trader. The trader has not shown himself either equal to the task of government or willing to assume its responsibilities, and the country can no more be left to him than it could be left to the Fulani Emir uncontrolled.

We are led to suppose that the trader is a very good man, and that he has the welfare of the natives at heart; that he merely trades with them from the desire to see them benefiting by the progress of Europe, and all that; and the same man who pleads for the trader asks us to merely appeal to the religious belief of the slave-raiding Emir in the matter of slavery, and tells us that, when we

meet him, we can easily explain to him the advantages of abolishing it and the tribute in slaves with the arguments of a 'moral precept enjoined by a justice which he can recognise'; all of which looks very nice on paper, and sounds well on the platform, but is a little wanting in something when we actually do meet the gentleman in question, and find, whatever may have been imagined, a huge mountain of flesh, with a harem of several hundred women, a following of over a thousand personal slaves, and when we know he has waded to his high position through blood or treachery, or both. We must have regard for the position and the interests of the trader and of the Emir, but we must be careful not to look at matters from their standpoint. Nevertheless, the trader need not fear his interests will be overlooked; the Government is quite alive to the fact that the country is protected for the benefit its association will be to the British Empire, and that that benefit is simply and solely *trade*. But it is the trade of the future as well as the trade of the present, and the trader of to-day thinks too often only of the present. His main idea is to get rich quickly and come out of it—which is all very well for the trader, but bad for the country and death to the trade.

However, missionaries do not mind whether they are criticised or not; they deem their labour above human criticism; and traders will go on trading, whether they have a hand in the actual government or not, secure in the knowledge that their interests command the first consideration. All either of them ask is to be left alone, and not to be hampered in their efforts, so long as they are lawful and reasonable efforts. They both know that, with all its faults, the Government is the only power which can adequately protect their lives and their property; so, if it were only that missionaries are being attacked a little too unfairly, if it were only that the trader is being glorified on paper into a sphere above

his legitimate one, there would be no great harm done. But these writers do not stop there; they attack the administration of the country wholesale. Mr. Morel puts into his book a few criticisms on minor matters of administration in Northern Nigeria, a few indications of things which may be all right—he is careful to say that—but which require explanation, and he takes the utmost pains to make it clear that he attacks neither the Government nor the High Commissioner, and that he only wishes to call attention to matters on which he thinks the public ought to be kept informed by the Government, lest in default of such information a wrong impression may be given, and the people—who, after all, have the ultimate say in the matter—may get the idea that the country is being mismanaged, or is not worth retaining. That is all the man who may be supposed to know something writes; but, building on that and expanding it, many writers who really know nothing cry out as if for all the world the administration were abolishing everything which is worth preserving, introducing everything which is pernicious, and committing monstrous breaches of every trust the nation has handed into its keeping. It is by a strange fatality that Northern Nigeria is so specially singled out for the assault, for the administration of that Protectorate has the benefit of the experience and errors of all the West Coast Colonies, and by the same hazard these writers, in attacking Northern Nigeria, light upon the very evils the Administration is straining to prevent or put an end to, and cry out against the suppression of things which are really being encouraged or reinstituted, and against the institution of things which are really being suppressed.

It is said that tolls on caravans have been abolished 'at one stroke'—the species of stroke is not specified, but it is a good sounding phrase. The facts are that 'blackmail' has been slowly and steadily abolished throughout

Hausaland, until to-day the people say a woman may carry a tusk from end to end of the country unmolested; and that all that possibly can be done is being done to coax trade back along the old routes, and re-establish the legitimate tolls which were dead and gone before the English went there. There is as much difference between the old tolls and the blackmail which has been suppressed as there is between the harbour dues of Marseilles and the loot of the robber tribes in the Sahara.

Then they assert that subsidies to native chiefs, which were pledged with the national honour, are being swept away, and, ignoring the fact that even to-day new subsidies are being initiated wherever anything is to be obtained for them, Sokoto is instanced. Because the Niger Company bargained with the Sultan of Sokoto to pay him a subsidy, and because when the Government took the administration of the country over that subsidy was not continued, it is said that honour has been sullied and that faith has been broken; the error in which is apparent as soon as the nature of the subsidy, as soon as the treaty under which it was paid, are given a moment's consideration. What is it supposed the subsidy was for? Surely it is obvious that there was to be a consideration for it. That consideration was permission to trade. So long as that permission was accorded, so long as British traders might go into the territory of Sokoto and trade, the subsidy was paid; and when it was stopped, it was because the consideration had been stopped, because British traders were warned off, and because the Sultan refused to hold any intercourse whatever with the White Man. When a man, who has entered into a contract for the use of a shop at an annual rental, finds the door shut in his face and the landlord determined to keep him out, does he continue to send in his cheque? Of course not. The shame of it is that our own countrymen should make it necessary to preach such an elementary parable.

Their case is weak, and they know it, so they drag in their ally, the French, and say: 'See how hard you have been to this good man. You promised to pay him a handsome sum of money every year if only he would submit himself to your influence, and have nothing to do with your mortal enemies over the border. Nobly he has performed his part of the bargain. See how he has resisted their blandishments. See how splendidly he has refused to have anything to do with them!' Exactly; and he refused to have anything to do with anyone, so he did not get his subsidy.

They would have the people believe that there is no recognition of the wonderful native system of land tenure, and that our own system is being forced upon the people, when nothing of the sort has been done. The fact in this instance is that all the native claims to the land have been respected and are respected—nay, more, he is protected from that pest of pests the concession hunter. The Government has taken to itself all the waste and unclaimed land, that is all; there is no upheaval of native customs in that. 'Ah, but,' it will be said, 'you have robbed the natives of the minerals.' It is true that the minerals have been annexed, but there is no interference with the native customs in that. The maxim, *Cujus est solum, ejus est usque ad infernos*, is no part of the land law of Northern Nigeria. The idea is beyond the comprehension of the people, and it is precisely because, with all their reputation for getting them, the natives know nothing about the minerals except such as they can, as in the salt and tin districts, stoop and pick up on the surface, and because the natives in other countries have shown themselves so utterly incapable of realizing the value and importance of the minerals, that the Government has stepped in. Instead of the natives being robbed, they are being protected; they are being assisted in the realization of what they could never get at themselves.

Instead of leaving them to barter away what they have never known anything about, the Government is making the bargains for them, and they are getting the fair market price. The royalties on their minerals are not shipped home to enrich a dominant race; they are part of the revenue of the country, and will be expended on its public works. The Government is not taking the minerals from the people; it is not a 'taking' at all. It is a nationalization; it is a saving of the minerals for the people. There is no such thing in Hausaland as an outsider becoming a millionaire in a few hours by making an unconscionable bargain with some ignorant and drunken chief; no such thing as the securing of a huge fortune in return for a quantity of trade gin at 10s. a dozen—case included.

Some complain that the native jurisprudence is being swept away, and that laws made in Downing Street are being crammed down the throats of the people. This also is utterly untrue. Everyone who holds any legal post out there, from the magistrate and registrar to the Chief Justice, knows that the law administered is the law of England, tempered by native custom, and that, except in cases of gross crime, the latter prevails. It is, by the way, a great pity that Mr. Morel should have stated, as he did, that men are appointed 'Attorney-Generals' of insignificant villages. There is, according to Whitaker, only one such official in each colony; and the statement, though inaccurate, is calculated to create a bad impression in minds ignorant of the true facts, and to do reasonless harm. Probably it is building upon this that other writers imagine a system of English law substituted for and overriding the one already existing in the land, which is palpably absurd to anyone having any knowledge of the facts. Any resident there will tell of his compulsory attention to native law, and the establishment and supervision of native courts. English laws there

must be; for British subjects taken into the country cannot be allowed to be governed either by native law or by none at all. Special laws must also be made for the people themselves on the introduction of conditions not provided for by their own.

Another accusation is that missionaries are being forced upon the people, and that the establishment of a Christian mission is a vital condition imposed on Emirs; when not only does the Government regard all missions very narrowly, but the missionaries themselves know well the dangers and risks of any but the most circumspect advance into a Moslem land.

The expense of the country is pointed at and called enormous, when it does not cost so much by £100,000 as a third-rate municipality costs its ratepayers, and when out of its annual grant it maintains, for the protection of the Coast Colonies as well as of itself, a standing army of over 2,000 men, not in barracks, but on a constant war footing, not always fighting, but always ready, and when, also out of its annual grant, it carries out public works for which a municipality would issue loans, and which a municipality would be entitled to regard as investments. The country is costing us something, but it is very little, taking the return into consideration; and it will pay its own way as soon as the unrest occasioned by the rottenness of the old order of things has subsided. The advantages we, as a nation, will reap from the inclusion in our Empire of the Hausa people, perhaps nearly as many in numbers as we have in England outside London, will lavishly compensate for the initial expenditure of capital required to establish the administration of the country on a sound, firm, and lasting basis.

The fighting and military operations attracted the cheap criticism that the country was being conquered for sheer lust of conquest, when it was not being conquered at all. The people there are numbered by the

million, and if the people had been fighting there would have been a very different tale to tell, there would have been a very different vote required from the House of Commons, and the War Office might even have been asked to help. The fact is, that the only fighting has been against Fulani rule, and only that in places. Whatever the Fulani rule may have been, and whatever, by the grace of God, it may yet be under our protection and influence, this is certain: that it had degenerated into pillage, rape, and slaughter, and that Hausaland, after a hundred years of it, was fast slipping into a state of anarchy.

Men who make all these accusations wind up by attacking Sir Frederick Lugard, perhaps the greatest living African of all our great Africans, certainly the man who has done and is doing more than anyone in Central Africa for British influence and for the black races. They point out with glee that 'Peace never precisely dogged his footsteps.' It may be true; but no more has Ease, no more has Luxury, no more has Failure. It is not Peace which has avoided him; it is he who has gone where he saw there was trouble coming. It is impossible for one who has met him to stand by and allow him to be reviled without protest; to allow unchallenged hints and innuendoes which dare not shape themselves, and have only to shape themselves to show how utterly baseless they are. His detractors are comfortably seated amongst all the advantages of modern civilization; he, in about as much comfort as a private has when on campaign, in a climate which the merely normal cannot survive and which racks the strongest, is giving his life, toiling day and night for freedom, for justice, for humanity, as he has done ever since, when a comparatively young man, he plunged alone into the heart of the Dark Continent, not to found an empire, not to add a hundred marks on a map, but to pluck up by the roots the foul tree of human

traffic, whose growth our navy had, by lopping, merely intensified.

The general idea induced by such articles is, as Mr. Stead puts it, that England treats the black races better than the Belgians but worse than the French, than which nothing could be more fallacious. The attitude of the French towards the ruler they find in the land is: 'We have come to rule this land instead of you. Come out and fight us if you wish. We are ready, and we are stronger than you are. This country has belonged to you because you have been strong enough to keep it; by the same right it is now ours.' The ruler does not come out and fight, or, if he does, he is beaten; then the attitude of the French towards the people is this: 'We have beaten your ruler. We are stronger than he was. By all the right which set him over you, by that and more we are now in his place. What tribute, what services, you have been accustomed to render to him, you will now render to us. We are just, our power is greater than his was, yet we ask no more than he did. You will find us a better ruler than he was.' And the people do.

On the other hand, the attitude of the English towards the ruler is: 'We come from the great White King across the sea. We wish to see your people fat. We wish to see your land fruitful. We wish to see your country happy, even as our own is happy. We bring wonders in the way of cloth and other things, which, with all your industry, you cannot approach in quality. We have much you want in our country; you have much we want in yours. We want to trade; you understand trading. We come to you; there is no need for you to risk your goods any more across the desert; our ships are on the river near. We do not wish to interfere with your existing domestic arrangements, but you must not catch men for slaves; the slave-market must cease, and if any man is killed you must punish his murderer, or we

shall. We love justice. We abominate man-catching. We abominate murder. Give up these two evils, and we will establish you more firmly on your throne than you have been yet. We will enable you to collect tribute as you used to when your day was brightest. We will re-establish your courts of justice. We do not wish to alter your laws, except when they are opposed to the principles of common humanity. Have we not said this in a proclamation which you have seen? You may collect court fees as before, but you must pay the Alkali with them. Would you like to start schools? We will help you. Find good Mohammedan teachers, and we will find a teacher of our own tongue, so that your children may understand us. Are all your trade routes open? Are there any robbers in your land? If so, we will send for some of our red-coated Hausas, who will hunt them down. Take the tribute from your people in anything but slaves; you will find many advantages in using our silver coins. We will teach you how to use the tribute so that your people will bless your name, yet you will be none the poorer.'

Before one can pretend to appreciate the differences between the two attitudes, one must have realized the differences in the circumstances under which the two European nations have been brought into contact with the black races now under their influence. In saying that the English treat the natives better than the French do, it is not for a moment intended to cast any aspersion on the French in respect of the methods they have adopted; for the circumstances leading to the methods the English have been enabled to adopt were extraordinarily favourable, and one thing after another helped most remarkably in a policy of consideration for the natives, which was impossible, and would have led to nothing but disaster over the frontier. In the first place, the position and shape of the British sphere of influence was a great

factor for success. The densely populated part of Northern Nigeria is wide towards the north and the desert and narrows considerably towards the south and the sea, so that it has been possible for the English approaching it from the south to commence with the effective occupation of a small area, and steadily extend their influence until there is now comparatively little uncontrolled. There are two magnificent waterways, provided by the rivers Niger and Benue, running right through the land from the south, and then up the west and east; so that, advancing along the river valley, it has been possible to keep open the lines of communication which have never from the start been interrupted except by the natural accidents of transport; and nothing but lack of funds has prevented the main stations being victualled, furnished and stocked as well as Lagos and Sierra Leone. This last, in itself, has been a tremendous help; but the political condition of the country has helped even more. The Fulani dynasty had welded the many tribes and peoples into one nation under one Administration; so the crisis, which let the English into possession of the country with scarcely any fighting, affected practically every tribe and district at once. The Fulani power had waned; even before the new power came there the established authority was fast losing its grip on the people, and the nation was ripe for a change; above all, there was the prophecy, held as sacred as the national faith, that a foreign power would, at this very time, take over the Government of the country from the Fulani.

These advantages have proved immense ones, and it is a thousand pities the French have not been equally fortunate; they have had to deal with tribe after tribe, district after district, starting at the beginning every time, and they have never had a line of communication worthy of the name. Their relief parties for Zinder were for some time convoyed through the British sphere because

they could not get safely through their own. So great have been the distances, that they have had to adopt the system of equipping expedition after expedition, and sending them away into the dark, cut off from all communications, far away from supplies, so that it was absolutely necessary for them to 'live on the land,' and for that purpose to conquer it. The distances are so great that it has been impossible for garrisons to be left, as in Nigeria, to keep the country in order as they have gone; and for this reason the first lesson has had to be as sharp as a lesson could be, so as to leave a memory which would keep malcontents in awe for many a day. It was necessary to insure that when the Frenchman had turned his back the old order would not prevail again, all the more unrestrained because the power that was had been broken; for if enormities were committed it was impossible to send and avenge them.

Therefore, in dealing with the comparative merits of the two methods, it must be clearly understood that the French themselves are not attacked. Their aims in the North of Africa are great, their efforts are tremendous, and their achievements are such as any nation might well be proud of; but when it is suggested to substitute in Northern Nigeria the methods which, though it is willingly admitted special difficulties necessitated them over the frontier, are none the less inferior; when one is put on defence of the methods the English have adopted, the differences must be pointed out clearly and distinctly, and that without mincing matters. Yea more: if there are reasons which make it probable that, even with the special advantages Northern Nigeria offered, the French would not have altered their methods, those reasons may be examined without fear or favour. There can be no offence in an Englishman's thinking his own race superior to the French or any other, and there can be none in his setting out some of the reasons for his opinion.

Some of the reasons why the French would not have done as well as the English in the management of Northern Nigeria have been already indicated. Amongst others there is (1) the almost inevitable necessity for uniform methods throughout the whole of the French possessions; there is (2) the all over-riding aim of an African empire; there is (3) the want of national control of supply; there is (4) the lack of responsibility of individual governors to the home Government; there is (5) the class of man which can be spared for the work; there is (6) the militarism—all these matters would as surely handicap the French in Northern Nigeria, as they do elsewhere, in any other method but their present one. Even without considering these reasons, one would have thought that the superiority of the English over the French methods would, until disproved, have been presumed by Englishmen; but these writers, after decrying British methods, of which they know little, proceed to praise French methods, of which they must know less. If they would take the trouble to get information, and not wait for it to drop into their open mouths, or build upon the false foundations of one another's imaginings, they would, without going far, have found differences on all these points which would naturally tend to influence the treatment of the black races. If, on the other hand, they would pause to consider many of the reasons adduced in support of the contention that the French methods are superior, they would find that they really tell against them. To the minds of these men it appears to be conclusive evidence of superior methods that the French have no punitive expeditions. If it is true they have not, it is probably because there are no natives left with the heart to incur punishment after a district has been occupied, settled, and left. Having once conquered, it would not be wonderful if the French do not find it necessary to reconquer. The English have never conquered Northern

Nigeria; the work has been rather one of rescue and establishing courts; so it is not wonderful that it is sometimes necessary to call in force to carry out the justice on which alone the new rule is based.

1. Uniformity of method, if not necessary, is inevitable. Is it to be supposed that the French would be able to draw such a distinction between the conditions of the Soudan and the conditions of Northern Nigeria as to make any change in the methods they have already learnt? The country was a new departure in British colonial extension; but with the French it would have been but an extension of their already established influence with all its methods.

2. So, too, however high the French aims in Northern Nigeria might have been, they would necessarily have had to be secondary to greater ones. The French nation at home had a tremendous ambition for the founding of a vast territorial African empire, which should be bounded on the north by the Mediterranean, on the south by the Pacific, the Congo, and the Great Lakes, on the east by the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, and on the west by the Atlantic, and that ambition is not yet dead. The French have made for it great sacrifices, and would naturally be biassed by the knowledge of those sacrifices, and anxious, if possible, to secure their reward. The English, too, had an African dream. But it was of an empire on the other side of the equator, where there has not—recently, at any rate—been any conflict with the natives, and British efforts in Central Africa can, fortunately, be extended wholly for trade and the securing of markets for manufactures now and in the future.

3. The money spent in Northern Nigeria is voted publicly in the House of Commons, and all requirements are there subject to the most minute criticism. The way it is to be spent is ascertained, scrutinized, and sanctioned by the Lords of the Treasury before that, and there is no

way of disposing of large sums of money without accounting for them to the knowledge of the people at home. The French, on the other hand, are not so hampered, for to a large extent, if not entirely, their colonial expenditure is merged in that of the great army, the cost of which the nation does not stint. The details of the expenditure are not so strictly inquired into, and so one of the greatest possible checks on conduct and policy is wanting. To an immense extent the control of policy goes with the control of supply, and the more easily the supply is obtained from home, the less responsibility there is to home authority, and so the less consideration there is likely to be for home notions and prejudices.

4. Of the greatest importance is the undoubted fact that the men whom France can spare for her 'colonizing' work round Dahomey, Zinder, and Chad are, for some reason or other, of a very different stamp from the men sent out to Northern Nigeria from Downing Street. It may be, and it probably is, that the army demands the best she can spare for service at home and in the more important work round Algiers; it may be that the great hardships keep many away; but whatever the reason may be, there is, with few exceptions, no comparison between the earnest men who are so carefully chosen by the Colonial Office and those doing the same work for the French. That work has for them been vitiated and retarded by men of the type of Chanoine, who turned land-pirate and murdered his own superior officer, only to meet a similar fate at the hands of his native troops when even they revolted against his atrocities; by men of the type of Mizon, who turned river-pirate, and, amongst others, committed the crime of giving or selling two modern cannon to a slave-raiding Emir—cannon which emboldened him to relapse into his old ways, and which shattered several young Hausa soldiers before his palace was stormed; and by men of the type of the

murderers of Keyes—as fine a young officer as ever did honour to His Majesty's uniform. England was, by good fortune, able, at the critical time, to spare the pick of her sons for this country. Until the Boer War broke out the West African Frontier Force was the one and only chance for a young officer on the look-out for active service, and the applications being in excess of the vacancies, the officers appointed were the very best Not only did the administration gain by the excellent results achieved through the efforts of these picked men, but they set an example which has been steadily followed by those who have come after them.

In the Keyes incident two different types of men are well distinguished. Three Frenchmen were travelling in British Borgu a few years ago, and were 'living on the land'—that is to say, were demanding food and carriers, and, if they were not forthcoming, taking them by force—all without payment. Keyes received complaints, and at last went up with an escort to arrest the men. What exactly happened may never be known; but this is the story as it was taken from the lips of a Nupe boy when, with a towel over one arm and the other outstretched, he told it to his master dressing for mess: 'Oh, Captain Keyes he have big-big heart—yes, de tree Frenchmen dey kill him—dey come, and dey take cattle and sheep, and de people come and tell de White Man—and Captain Keyes he go wid sma-small men—and he find dem, and he say to his men, "Stay back"—and he go alone into de tent—and de tree Frenchmen get up—and he say dey must give him der guns—and dey no will—and he say, "Very well, we no want to fight"—and dey all sit down—and dey talk plenty-much—and de tree Frenchmen dey get angry, and talk loud—and de soldiers say, "Ha!"—and Captain Keyes he say, "Very well"—and he get up, and he go to come outside—and de big Frenchman he shoot him in de back—and everyone run away—

de tree Frenchmen dey go one way and de soldiers dey go anodder—and dey tell all about it—and dey make ready quick — and dey catch 'um — oh, Captain Keyes he have big-big heart.' The boy positively wept; but they easily weep. These three Frenchmen were not, of course, Governors of provinces. Two of them were, it is reported, deserters from their army, and they were handed over to the British authorities for trial; but, after sentence, the French Government claimed them. To a certain extent they have been made martyrs of. They are a type well known in the French territory, and they set a tone which is hard to eradicate.

5. To all their Governors, good or bad, the French give absolute power in their provinces; and we are asked by writers, whose great complaint is that they know nothing about what is going on, to believe, without evidence, that the work done by these Governors is far better than that of their own countrymen, because nothing is heard to their discredit. A French Governor is restricted by no regulations. The people are his, body and soul, and he sees there are no complaints. Compare this with the limited power of a British Resident, who has to report every case he tries to the High Commissioner, who in turn has to report every murder trial to the Secretary of State. Compare it with the limitations placed on a British military officer, who may not inflict *any* corporal punishment within twenty-four hours of the offence; and then consider which system is likely to be the best for the black races.

6. The complaint against British militarism is a remarkable one, considering that the country, and the army maintained in it, are run by the Colonial Office, the heads of which are generally considered to be, if anything, at variance with the War Office, and are reported to manage such military operations as they consider necessary on business lines. Still more remarkable is the extraordinary

change of tone towards militarism and military operations as soon as the men are writing of another nation. According to them, the French, actuated by the highest motives (it is not definitely indicated what these highest motives are, but they are assumed to be something immensely superior to our own), have fought their way superbly through the desert (where there was no one to fight except the Tuaregs, and they are as troublesome as ever, with their little failing of wiping out convoys), have pacified Timbuctoo (where there was nothing but peace), have gloriously quelled some few score of cut-throat brigands, such as Samory and Rabeh, and while we are boggling over a hut-tax in Sierra Leone, are collecting every kind of tax without opposition.

The French are especially held out as having done good service to humanity by destroying Rabeh, who is called a 'marauding chief with no fixed territory, whose army moved from country to country like a swarm of locusts,' and who is portrayed as a villain of the deepest dye, when, bad as he was, he was made of better stuff than the Fulani Emirs. We are led to suppose that he was a mere adventurer, a devastater of districts, a slaughterer of natives, and that he left a desert in his track. He probably did the last, for he came across the Sahara from the north-east, and left it as he found it. Had it been anything but a desert, he would have stayed and settled down in it. His object was exactly the same as that of the French—to found an empire—the only difference between them being that he had no *patrie* and no European nation behind him. The French, fighting their way towards the populous and fertile land rumoured to lie round Lake Chad, met Rabeh bent on a similar errand; and there was warfare. The irresponsible commanders in charge of the French native troops made Bornu the theatre of a little war with Rabeh, who, mark you, had quite as much right to be there as they had—

the right of conquest; and having, by the skin of their teeth, come out top, they count the population, point to the desolation, the deserted villages, and exclaim: 'Look what a bad man that Rabeh was!'

The fierce light which beats on British military operations does not extend across the border. We do not know which side in this little war deserved our sympathies the less. Rabeh is said to have murdered a trader; but that was after the trouble had started, and Rabeh's people denied that it was a murder at all. The trader was a prisoner of war, a militant merchant; and, after being detained as a political prisoner for some time, was executed in solemn form for a violently abusive attack on Rabeh before his court, when he called him a pig and criticised the morality of his mother. It may be permissible to say things of that sort to an emperor to his face in Europe, but it is generally considered better not to risk it; and it certainly is a crime, and a capital offence, according to the code of the Soudan. In its inception the war was without real excuse, especially as Rabeh had plenty of scope for founding his empire in British Bornu; in its end it was beyond all imagination disgraceful.

Rabeh had a son who, barely out of his teens, showed he was a born commander, and when the old man was preparing for what he knew would be his last stand on his ammunition and baggage, he urged this youth to escape and to make a treaty with the English. Intending to do this, the young man gathered the remnants of his dead father's army round him, and retired further into the British sphere of influence. This did not suit the Frenchmen, and they pursued him with all possible speed until they overtook him; and then he stood at bay. It was a standing at bay indeed. He chose his ground and ordered and led his attack with a skill and a dash which would put to shame many a tactician in Europe. It was a pitched battle after the style of the olden days—a clash at close

quarters in which spearmen fought furiously on either side, and there was much slaughter. Fad-al-Allah—that was the young man's name—strengthened his wings, and, on his centre falling back before the frontal attack, the French were overwhelmed from both sides and the rear. Mindful of his father's word—of the advice to go and treat with the English, not fight them—Fad-al-Allah did not follow up his advantage, or the story might have had a different ending, but left the enemy to fall back to their station across the frontier, and came on towards the British outposts on the Benue. The High Commissioner was expected shortly, so Fad-al-Allah was told to sit down and wait his arrival. This he did, secure in the fancied protection of the other white race of whom his father had such a high opinion; but when the High Commissioner arrived Fad-al-Allah was dead. Surprised and overwhelmed in his camp, this embryo ruler of men was—they do not call it murdered—by the irresponsible commander who, smarting under the shame of his last reverse, had made a dash across the German Cameroons, and had rushed no less than 150 miles into the land which French statesmen, for similar promises elsewhere, agreed to leave to British influence alone. Fad-al-Allah is no more, and it is to be hoped the survivors of his following are few, for, judging the English by their own standards, what must they think of them for allowing such an act of warfare against a man with whom they were in negotiation, and who was sitting at their gates, to pass unnoticed?

Having, from incidents like this, satisfied themselves that the French are everything that can be desired, the writers turn to consider the English; and because, perhaps, they are far too modest to say anything which could be construed into a compliment or good opinion for their own race, the contrast is rubbed in with a vengeance. The English in Northern Nigeria are eternally sending

out punitive expeditions, for no purpose whatever except the glorification of hypothetical military Residents, who are supposed to get promotion and medals every time there is blood shed in their provinces or their police votes are exceeded, while over the border there never are such things as punitive expeditions at all. To support this hypothesis the British nation is held out to be spoiling for a fight, glowing with military ardour, and thirsting for blood; every official is claimed to be 'drunk with a sense of power, begotten of the immense advance in perfecting weapons of destruction'—words written by an Englishman in a London monthly magazine; when, as a matter of fact, the House of Commons, which is supposed to speak for the nation on things like this, is, notwithstanding its recent khaki fever, well known to be dead against fighting niggers and down upon any official who causes it—yea, even upon those who are so unfortunate as to feel it is their duty to advise it; and when those Residents who have been military men know full well they must please the Colonial Office, not the War Office, if they want to get on. It is graciously granted that a British Resident will not take a bribe, and we should, perhaps, be thankful for even that small mercy; but it is insisted—Heaven only knows on what evidence—that his greatest chance of promotion is in securing for his province a sufficiency of expensive expeditions, with all their attendant risk of disaster and loss of officers. When men take upon themselves the responsibility of propounding such a proposition as that a Resident's chances of promotion are bettered by military expeditions being found necessary to enforce his authority, their minds must be in a curiously undeveloped state, and they will, perhaps, hardly be convinced to the contrary.

It is impossible for anyone who has been there to read such a sentence as, 'France, with her wider territory, has so governed as to have no rebellions to suppress,' without

recalling the sentence, 'They made a desert, and called it Peace.' In talking about punitive expeditions, we must remember it is hard for the native to understand any method of government but that of force, any power save through conquest, and, especially, that when the method of freedom and justice—the power of the law (not English law)—is brought into a land for the first time, it is always necessary to have soldiers ready to enforce it, for the law which is not enforced becomes a mockery. The natives know and understand when an expedition is sent to burn a town for refusing to give up a murderer, that the White Man is not warring against the people; the natives do not regard an expedition, sent to depose an Emir who has broken his treaty not to catch men for slaves, as a military operation directed against themselves; they recognise these as the reasonable and natural exercisings of authority, as something they thoroughly understand. It is only in the minds of penmen in London, who only know the Sheriff in the person of a snuffy-looking individual, reeking of drink, and leaving his trade-mark on everything he touches, that these exercisings of the same power in Hausaland become little wars, suppressions of rebellions, mowings down of naked niggers, devastatings of districts, and horrors which harrow up their souls.

The only victories in the land until Kano and Sokoto have been in the successful carrying out of carefully laid plans for arriving at the objective of a punitive expedition on the exact day which has been calculated upon at headquarters. The military operations of the last few years have been little more than manœuvres with ball-cartridge, excellently planned coups, and movings about of small bodies of men, by which every object has been attained without bloodshed. It would be absurd to call it a conquered country. There are anything up to thirty millions of people in it, and it is probable that two thousand

will cover the killing since the Government took the administration over from the Niger Company. Let us consider what operations there have been, for it is from what operations there have actually been that we must draw our conclusions, not from the mere imaginings of a disordered brain.

The expedition to Kano and Sokoto, and a resulting fight with the flying Sultan at Burmi, was the worst. Sokoto was occupied after a feeble show of opposition. Kano, which has a fighting wall twelve miles round, and is filled with people, was occupied after a slight resistance. The attacking force did not lose a man, and the enemy only lost about 300 at each place, which no doubt seems a large number after the surrenders in the Transvaal; but while it certainly is a large number for the country, it is nothing to what it would have been had the people, instead of a mere handful of personal retainers of the King, been up in arms. Mr. Stead may sneer, and say it was a piece of remarkably good luck; but it was a piece of good luck which had been foreseen and which was inevitable—the inevitable result of England's treatment of the black races. The inhabitants of Kano did not take any hand in the game; their King was being deposed, they themselves were heartily sick of him—and the people are fairly safe judges on such a matter.

The operation before that was an escort of the Anglo-French Boundary Commission up the Dallul Mauri. It was a peaceful expedition, and only fought when attacked by robbers.

The one before that was another escort, the one which started to take the French relief column for Zinder across our territory. There has been no fighting reported at present, and news travels fast there.

The expedition before that was a small one sent at a few hours' notice to burn a town called Abuja. This

was a mere police affair—a Sheriff's job. The town had gradually grown into a robber stronghold, an asylum for the wrong-doers and escaped criminals of four provinces, who owed no allegiance to any chief, defied all authority, beat and murdered the messengers of all Powers, white or black, and finally murdered a native missionary who happened to pass near them. The complaints of this place came from the people themselves, who were as heavy losers through the trade route being closed as they were through the pillaging of parties raiding from this den of thieves. The force met with no dangerous opposition—it was little more than a march there and a march back—and there was little blood shed.

The one before that was the Bautshi-Chad-Benue expedition, which has been magnified into several little wars, but was merely a long march of occupation and tour of inspection. It took a party of mineral prospectors up to Bautshi in the tin district and left a Resident and garrison there, after appointing an Emir in place of the old one, who refused to negotiate, and fled incontinently without striking a blow on the approach of the column. The expedition then proceeded unopposed right up to Lake Chad to inquire into the truth of persistent rumours of French atrocities in our territory. Once only was there any fighting, and that was when the column was ambushed and attacked in broad daylight by a wandering slave-raider called Mallam Gibrella, who lost 160 men in a few minutes when the Maxim got to work, and was captured and deported. Leaving garrisons and a Resident to watch the Province of Bornu, the expedition settled a few points on the boundary with the Germans, who had sent an expedition up with a similar object, and returned by the Benue River, burning *en route* a few villages belonging to some pagan hill-tribes who had been guilty of murder upon murder and highway robbery unrestrained, thus inflicting a lesson which would have a good effect,

but not do serious damage, for the people all cleared out in time, and would return and rebuild the huts with new grass a few weeks after the avengers' backs were turned.

The one before that was the Kontagora expedition, which was a brilliant bit of transport and outmarching. The hundred native infantry and thirty native mounted infantry of which it was composed captured, three weeks after starting, the whole force with which the old Emir had taken the war-path against Zaria, who was then apparently friendly and who asked the White Man to save him. No blood was shed at all; nearly 12,000 natives were sent back to their farms and fishing, only too glad to go and escape the unprofitable obligation of fighting the already deposed Emir's battles for nothing; and the Emir himself, who had twice broken treaties, was sent to Yola on parole.

The one before that was the Yola expedition, and that was not a bloody one. The Emir was most unpopular with his people, principally because of his refusal to allow the Niger Company to trade in his domain, and the battle was merely the storming of his palace defended by some of his slaves. There was little loss of life, and there would have been less but for the cannon Mizon had presented to the Emir.

This takes us back to 1901, and in the previous year, the one in which our administration commenced, there was no wholesale slaughtering such as suggested, the operations being mainly a little effective artillery practice or mere demonstrations in force. All along there has been nothing that could be dignified with the title of war, nothing so serious as the fighting with Rabeh up North; and the reason and cause of all the operations has been the delivering of the people from the oppressor, the opening of trade routes for the natives to use, and the stopping of slave-raiding, murder, highway robbery, and brigandage.

The French may have a wider territory in North Africa than we have, but ours is the greater task, and ours will be the greater reward. By good statesmanship and good luck we have in the partition of Africa secured for our influence the two most densely populated parts of it, Uganda and Northern Nigeria. From a population chart it will be seen that the only other part which can be called densely populated is the strip down each bank of the Nile in North Egypt, and it will be readily understood why the French with their vast territories envy us our comparatively small spheres.

When the French come into the land, it is for the people merely a change of masters; when the English come, it is the coming of a new kind of power altogether, a power which regulates their rulers, controls their controllers, removes their oppressors, and insures a measure of freedom, justice, and prosperity never known in the land before.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BLACK LABOURER

No demand for machinery while labour is so cheap — Engaging labourers—The headman—Making the bargain—Nothing but head-carriage—A wheelbarrow story—The head and hoe supreme —Public works—Collecting men from the chiefs—A village built in a day—Rations short at first, but soon plentiful—Returning home—Shipping labourers from the coast—The branch-boat, the surf-boats, and the steamer—Life on board by day and by night —Discharging a living cargo—Government transport work— Soldiers and cargo a good combination—Unloading girders and barrels of cement—Stupidity and numbers—Quarrelling and discipline—The mechanical engineer the greatest blessing Africa will get.

THERE is no demand just now for steam navvies in Northern Nigeria; the work is done more cheaply by hand. In the first place, there is not so much work needed as at home. If it is a railway which is being constructed, there is not so much need for high embankments, deep cuttings, or tunnelling. Time is not of so much importance, and land is not of so much value there as it is here. The line can be taken round the hills, and can even go up some of the gentler slopes. It does not make any material difference at the other end if the train has to go back in the middle of an incline, and try it again with a longer rush, any more than it matters whether the engine runs back a few miles to get some water from the last pool, on finding one dry, or waits for half an hour to let a swarm of locusts pass in front. There is

plenty of time, there is plenty of land, and, above all, labour is cheap, and that does not tend to stimulate invention in labour-saving machinery. It can be worked out on paper. Take the cost of a steam digger, delivered free on board ship at Liverpool in sections, add the freight out, the freight up-river, reckon something for the risk of breakage, find out how much a second-class engineer will want to go out with it and see to it being put together properly, ask the price of wood fuel, the rate of wages demanded on the Coast by black engineers capable of working it, and then make a really surprising allowance for wear and tear; when you have done all this you will find the cost of the machine, but you must allow margins in all these matters. On the other hand, put down the wages paid to a man for a day; then measure up the bulk of earth to be moved, find the weight of a load, find how many loads each man can carry in a day, that is all you will require to arrive at how many men you need, and for how long—there is no Workmen's Compensation Act. You will see at once that the machine is altogether out of it.

If an embankment is required for a railway, or for keeping a river to its bed, or for the incline to a bridge, a few hundred black men are told off from the permanent staff, or beaten up from the villages—anyone who is willing to earn a few pence a day by walking backwards and forwards, picking things up and putting them down again in merry and congenial company. These are divided into gangs of twenty or so, and each gang chooses a headman, who shall order them about, keep them to their work, see they do enough and do it according to instructions, act as their spokesman, do no work himself, and draw 25 per cent. extra pay. Having arranged who shall be the lucky man, the bargain is repeated. There is nearly always a quibble over the rate, and then the headman solemnly puts his gang in a

row, stands in front of them and does the talking, with an occasional glance over his shoulder for approval, and his face as stern as if he were discussing whether every fifth or every tenth man of them is to be shot. He gesticulates to the interpreter, and the interpreter, with apology and deprecation on every feature of his face, translates the demand to the Public Works officer in charge. Some little time is taken in this palavering—no self-respecting headman would let his men start without it—and the gang ultimately agree on the standard or declared rate of pay. The whole business is intensely humorous, for the White Man's argument is mainly, 'Rats!' or, 'Take it or leave it,' or, 'Do you take me for a bush cow?' At least, that is the argument he uses; there is no knowing what weird contortion of blackmail, illicit commission, superstition, or terrorism it becomes by the time the interpreter has ceased to paraphrase it. However, at last an agreement is arrived at, the obedient gang grunt approval, and, breaking up into chattering groups, hang their outer garments on the bushes, take a hitch on their loin-cloths, and squat down to make pads for their heads—thick, twisted rings of grass.

Everything is carried on the head in Central Africa; it is only in the illustrated papers we see negroes staggering along with loads on their shoulders. The little kiddies in the villages are trained to it. The first work they do is to scamper off to the water-pool, and walk stiffly back, as proud and pleased with themselves as can be, with the calabash full to the brim, with their little knees trembling at the strain and their shoulders gleaming with the splashing overflow. The regulation load is 60 pounds, and if more than this is to be carried in one lump, it is slung on a pole, and one or more get under each end of it. Hammocks are carried in the same way. While a negro has a load in his arms he groans and pulls the most awful faces, but as soon as it is on his head it is out of the way,

and he seems to forget all about it. Nevertheless, there is always much chattering over choosing the loads. The biggest and strongest villain of them all will make for the smallest box and stand astride of it, beaming with the consciousness of something attained, until the headman gives him another to put under it, and he grins good-humouredly at the idea of being done after all. The makers of an embankment are supplied with a miscellaneous assortment of things to carry earth in. There are huge calabashes from the market at the ford, large cement-kegs cut in half, or small ones which, having cracks in them, are not fit to carry water from the condenser; wooden boxes from the canteen, old buckets from the marine department, bits of wood with a zinc lining on the top, and baskets of every conceivable size and shape—anything, in fact, which will hold about 60 pounds of earth, and which can be lifted on to the head, and will stay there without crumpling up.

There is a story that an energetic young Director of Public Works once induced the Crown agents to take up a well-designed light wheelbarrow. It was an excellent idea, all made of thin steel; the legs and handles could be folded over, and the barrows could be packed in nests, one inside the other, for shipment. He was immensely pleased when the experimental consignment came out, and attended personally to the handles and legs being riveted up. Then he wrote a special report telling of the delight with which the labourers came and patted and fondled them as they stood in a row outside the office, resplendent in blue paint and a white 'V.R.' From time to time he asked the headmen how the men liked them, and thought he was perhaps on the highroad to a C.M.G. when told how they fought for them. He would have ordered out a larger consignment and got them recommended to other colonies, but one day he happened to meet the labourers using them, and had an attack of fever on seeing a line of twenty stalwart Yorubas, each

carrying one of the new patent light wheelbarrows, half full of earth, *on his head.*

The native does not appreciate the economy of a wheelbarrow, and prefers to carry everything as his fathers have carried it before him, just as he prefers the hoe to the spade. If you give a Yoruba a spade you will find him in his yam field chopping the ground with the side of it, or squatting on his haunches and scraping with it, with one hand on the handle and the other grasping it close to the blade. The only thing which will supplant the head will be the tipping truck. The native will delight in hitching the lever which sends a full day's load of earth rattling down the slope of the embankment at once, just as he delights in working the donkey-engine which yanks a tarpaulin full of baggage out of the hold. He will go straight from the most elementary to the most improved scientific methods without the intermediate courses which the White Man has had, and it is interesting to see how he behaves.

At present he is a little of a failure as a manager of machinery. He can oil up and clean the outside parts, and he can sit sucking his pipe on a patched deck-chair on the side of the engine, quite unconscious of the noise, the heat, and the smell of it. He knows the engine is doing more work than the whole crew could do if they tried, and he is conscious of a kind of superiority as he fancies he controls it. He is all right so long as the engine runs smoothly; so long as nothing happens he is as good as a white engineer, and much cheaper; but as soon as anything goes wrong he is out of his element. He is all hand and no head, as they say; but it is perhaps hardly fair to compare a native, who knew nothing of files, drills, lathes, or machinery five years ago, with a white man who has been bred in our engineering shops, and has been familiar with steel and fly-wheels ever since he left school —and before. By the time machinery has supplanted

manual labour he will, no doubt, be well able to manage it; at present manual labour pays best.

If a large public work is in hand, and a few thousand labourers are required, the first thing to do is to summon the local chiefs and arrange with them for a supply of men. The call for labour for public works is getting to be a recognised thing now in return for the protection of our administration. Sometimes the labour is at full pay of from 6d. to 9d. a day; sometimes it is free. A few days after the proportion in which the chiefs shall send them is agreed they begin to come in. A long line of men, walking a few feet apart from one another in single file, each with a bundle or basket on his head containing his worldly belongings. There is a plentiful sprinkling of women and children, who all carry something. They hold their heads up and carry themselves well; all natives do that; it is the natural result of head-carriage. A native will be very old and infirm before he stoops. They hold their heads up, and do not express surprise at the uniforms of the white men, or at the signs of civilization all round them; but they don't miss much as they wind through the market. They do not gather in a bunch even as they walk along a wider road; walking in single file is another habit of Central Africa as hard to eradicate as head-carriage.

Having arrived at the Public Works Office, which is perhaps a mud-hut, or a grass-mat one, or may be a green canvas tent, they squat down and look about them until their numbers and district are recorded and they are free to go for a night in the village, half a mile away. There, a few extra fires are lighted in honour of their arrival, and the night is made more than usually hideous by the tom-toms and squeals as they show off their dancing powers to a new audience; but however little they may have slept, they all turn up in the morning to build themselves houses. The department has collected a huge pile of mats, 5 feet by 10, made of the coarse, tall grass, and as

the bush, full of slender boughs fit for framework, and twigs fit to tie the thatch down with, is being cleared all round, there is plenty of material. The labourers fling themselves among the mats, gather as many as they can embrace, heave them on to their heads, and run off to the place prepared for them. It is one of the first instincts of possession to run, and it is a merry, chattering party altogether. A site has been chosen for the labourers' town, and this is parcelled out among the tribes collecting for the work. There are no intricate plans prepared; all that is necessary is a little intelligent supervision. The new houses are set out in rows as regularly as may be, and if one is started out of line the white man in charge will come and ride his pony on it, or kick it and its builder into place. Half a day sees the new lot finished, the mat walls and fresh thatch looking remarkably neat and tidy, and the women are busy over the cook-pots. There are no sanitary arrangements, but there are certain rules and regulations as to distance, which are explained to the appointed headmen.

At first there is a dearth of food, and the patience of the youngster in charge of the work is sadly tried by the daily complaints of starvation. The average native never looks a day ahead, and when he finds prices high in the nearest market he jumps to the conclusion there is a famine, though there may be plenty spoiling in another one a mile away. It is only necessary, however, to make a few payments of wages in rice, for news of demand soon spreads, and women come streaming in with guinea corn-flour and other stuff piled high in calabashes and baskets of squeaking chickens, while boys drive in little flocks of sheep from all the villages round. It frequently happens that the store-clerk, who has been sent up post-haste from headquarters with a quantity of rice in response to an urgent wire describing the state of destitution in the new village, finds the place alive with

chickens and goats, a market humming merrily round a baobab-tree on its outskirts, and the air full of the bleating of sheep. The youngster explains that what he described was no exaggeration a few weeks ago, and that the change is nothing less than a miracle; the ton or so of rice is taken into his accounts, and given out, to those who will take it, at the market rate, which it settles once and for all.

The labourer brings a woman with him to grind his corn and cook his food, or soon finds one from somewhere, and under her care the chickens increase in a wonderful way. If a white man starts a fowl-run, it is as much as he can do to get eggs from it, in spite of his enclosure and precautions against pythons, bush-cats, hawks, and other pests; but the native women seem to understand the business thoroughly, and every hut swarms with chicks. Perhaps it is because they roost inside it. The labourer himself has probably never received wages before in his life, and his happiness is evident. One of the first things he does with his money is to buy a sheep, and when he has bought it he takes care not to lose it. He ties a cord round its neck, and it soon learns to follow him about just like a dog. He brings it to work with him and ties it up to a bush in sight. It follows him through the market and everywhere he goes. It is an obvious happiness to him, especially as the next feast-day comes round. After the feast-day he starts saving for another. When he has worked for a year or so the labourer goes home, and probably becomes an important man in the village of his mother. There he will be the great authority on the power of the White Man. He will perhaps have lost faith in the local 'ju-ju,' though that is not very probable unless he has made friends among the officers' servants, who hail from the enlightenment of Accra, and his wives will support him in oily opulence to the day of his death.

There is a great demand for labourers on the West Coast just now, on the mines and on railways for them, and hundreds are being shipped from one place to another. It is said that Lagos makes a considerable revenue out of labourers, who come on and along the new railway from Ibadan, or otherwise from Yoruba country in the interior, being taken to other places. Great care is very properly taken that they are protected both in their contract and in their treatment. Every man is registered, and if the contract takes them out of the colony, there are special provisions as to deposit of a sum equal to half their wages while it lasts, or something of that sort, to insure their being sent back when it is over. A fee of a pound a head for the registration mounts up when they are shipped 400 at a time, and it is a very pleasant way of raising revenue. It cannot be called taxation, so no one can agitate against it.

The first things the passengers notice when the captain expects a shipment of natives is that canvas conveniences are being built on the lower deck—the open part between the promenade and the forecastle—that a raised gangway is being rigged, so that the white crew can get to their quarters without going down on to it, and that numerous ropes are being hung over the side. On approaching Lagos, they see the branch-boat anchored outside the bar waiting for them, and as their own anchor is dropped they can make out through their glasses that the solid black mass fore and aft is woolly heads. These slowly pour, like a thick liquid, over the side of it into surf-boats, and the boxes can be seen flying down from the deck to the outstretched arms. The passengers all crowd to the side as they approach; they would do so for much less. There are papers or something to be gone into with a heavily-uniformed and palpably Government official before they are allowed to come on board. If some formalities were not observed, the purser would never know to whom he

must look for payment of the twenty-five shillings a head. He can no more wring money out of the black flesh than he can draw blood out of a stone; nor is he allowed to throw anything overboard when counting time comes.

There may be four surf-boats full alongside at once, all struggling frantically to get near the ropes, and, as they rise and fall on the swell, and bang and bump against the side, it seems a miracle that the innumerable black arms and legs do not get trapped off or smashed to pulp. There is no particular reason why one boat should discharge its struggling mass before another, but the boatmen, who sit on the gunwale and stoop down until their chests touch it at each stroke they take with the unique hand-shaped surf-paddles of the coast—these all seem to think their future happiness depends on getting under the opening in the bulwark first and keeping there. The natives, too, seem so anxious to get safely on board that they imperil their lives and limbs by scrambling from the outer boats to the ones which are nearer to the side. The occupants of these resent this, and many blows are struck in the general din. Every now and then a man will fall into the sea, and be rescued with shouts of merriment and screams of terror. The native always gets frantic on occasions like this; if he didn't—if he stopped to realize in cold blood the risks he runs—he would never get aboard at all.

At last the mate gives the signal that it is all right, and up they come. At first they only step over the bulwarks one by one, for, as the boat rises and sinks 6 feet or more on every wave, it is not at all easy for a man to shake clear of the crowd and catch hold of the swaying rope ladder with both hands at the right moment. After several timid attempts he will clutch it, and before he has lifted his feet the boat will sink away from under him. He clings on to it, looks mournfully over his shoulder at the green water between the boat and the ship, and screams—at least, he

has his mouth open and looks as if he were screaming; there is such a pandemonium that it is impossible to say for certain whether he himself is making any sound or not. The boat will come rolling up again, and just when the lady leaning over the rail with her kodak on the hurricane-deck gives a little gasp and draws back lest she should see blood, a host of hands carry him on, and he slowly and gingerly creeps up, more dead than alive.

This awkwardness passes off, the surf-boats are busy passing backwards and forwards with fresh loads, and as they tie the boats better and adjust the ropes a little, black flesh seems to stream on board about as quickly as it poured over the side of the branch-boat. As soon as one falls over off the bulwarks, he is ordered and cuffed by the Kroomen in charge of the ropes away on to the other side of the deck, and he runs there like a rabbit, mightily pleased with himself with having got through it with no bones broken. He squats in a corner and sucks one of his knees, which has a bit off about the size of a shilling, and he grins to see his mates come staggering across to him. Presently, however, he remembers he has left several things in the boat—a wife, a few children, and sundry boxes and bundles of worldly possessions. Then he forgets all about his knee, gets up, and slips across the deck again, where he hangs round the Kroomen like a lost dog round a butcher's stall. When the crowd becomes thicker, and he can get to the side without being yanked back by the scruff of his neck, he peeps over, and screams at the top of his voice to his good lady, who is laughing and crying and sadly tumbled. What with the wobbling of the boat, the shocks as first one and then another falls against her, and the occupation of defending her face from the feet which seem to climb over her in their hurry to get out, the poor thing is half crazy, and when she catches sight of her good man's mouth, she shakes both her fists at him at once, and screams back in a most

unhelpful manner, for her first thought is that he is responsible in some vague way for all this tribulation. The bright-eyed children enjoy the fun much more than she does, and when she in her turn, goodness knows how, has been bundled on board, she does not think so much of them as of the household goods and chattels, on which she was so carefully sitting down in the bottom of the boat.

As soon as the surf-boats are empty of flesh, the Kroomen throw down light ropes with loops at the ends, and the boxes and bundles are slipped into them and pulled up as quickly as possible, and tipped over loose inside the bulwarks. Then other Kroomen stand over the growing heap of invaluable rubbish, and fling it, just as if it were cocoanuts, in armfuls across the deck. Then there is tribulation indeed, as box after box pitches on its corner and splits, spreading its precious contents in all directions. Here a bottle of palm-oil is broken, and the thick red patch spreads slowly about; there a mat of guinea corn-flour splits, and the gleaming powder adds a touch of white to the general kaleidoscope. Like school children scrambling for nuts, the wretched niggers pounce upon their belongings, and carry such as they can find off to their corner. If a box is broken, they tie it up with a loin-cloth or something, and affectionately gather the contents and replace them, expressing neither grief at their own losses nor merriment at those of others. Loss of goods is part of the risks of the transhipment—hardly a risk at all, it is such a certainty.

They gather in their families and groups, and begin to eat, forming a close ring, and excluding the outside world as effectually with their backs as they could with the wall of a hut. They have, perhaps, been several hours waiting on the branch-boat, and the first thing they do is to eat. Sitting round the bowl of ready-cooked rice, each of them in turn shapes his four fingers into a scoop and digs it

deep into the soft mass, bringing away a huge mouthful. This is dipped into a smaller bowl of palm-oil, and pushed down the sucking lips. The quantity they put out of sight is amazing. They eat and they sleep. They no doubt criticise the row of amused passengers leaning over the promenade rail as much as they are themselves discussed. They will live for the next two days on the deck, like sheep in a pen. They will be happier if the captain has been able to have an awning rigged for them, and they will be lucky if there are no tornadoes. If it does rain, their condition may be imagined; it cannot be described.

If it is fine, they form an entertainment all day long for the passengers, some of whom are on the look-out for likely servants. They are as fascinating as a monkey-house. The children play little games, or wander about like kittens, and shyly make acquaintance with the kiddies of other groups, or sit demurely on the boxes, watching with open eyes the whirligig of new things in this wonderful big canoe. The women busy themselves over the meals, making a great display of the ubiquitous enamel ware, or do one another's hair up into the most weird shapes. The lady being operated on will lie prone, and bury her face between the other's knees, lying patiently there for hours at a time, while the old erection is slowly unpicked with the brass pins, and the new one is carefully constructed. When the last little bit of black fluff is tucked into its place, she will fumble in her bundle for the antimony bottle, fashioned of hide in Kano, and brought down by a Hausa trader, and will add the finishing touch with a daub of solid black on her brows and eyelids. The strong youths, with great folds of muscle running from the back of their necks to their loins, lie sunning themselves at full length, with a lump of tobacco in their cheeks, or their lips yellow with crunched kola-nut. They gaze into the firmament, or,

turning their heads, chaff one another or the ladies watching them. Some hang stealthily round the grill drawn across the end of the stateroom passage, and woe betide the man whose porthole looks out towards them, unless he has been warned in time, and moved all his shaving-tackle to the other side of his cabin. The men tell stories, or gamble in a philosophical way with cowries and stones, just as the passengers play bridge in the saloon after dinner, and poker all day in the smoke-room. Brawls rise here and there over the most trivial things; perhaps a passing touch may have spilt a pannikin of water, or plastered a luscious mouthful of soft rice all over a face, and these are rudely quelled by the guardian Kroomen. On the whole, they are orderly, and easily kept so. They marshal quietly in rows, to be counted and claimed by the various headmen; there is no disorder; they do as they are told. Obedience is not a virtue in Central Africa; it is a habit, a national trait.

Everyone on board, from the mates to the fat-cheeked bugler-boy from the training-ship, is kind to them, and regards them with amused toleration. No white man treats them harshly. The most extraordinary thing is the way natives of Africa treat one another. The Kroomen (strong black fellows, all animal, picked up to do the holystoning, swilling, discharging—in fact, all the work of the ship—at Sierra Leone, where the white sailor's work for the voyage is ended), treat the black deck passengers like a brutal railway porter will treat sheep. One has only to see the Kroomen pummelling the Hausa labourer as he throws himself on his precious belongings to prevent them being smashed, baskets in which can be seen bottles and soft fruits, but which are none the less pitched across the deck as if they were brickbats; one has only to watch the face of the superior educated native who has learnt to pray and to sit in a deck-chair, to see

him draw the hem of his stinking old frock-coat away from the touch of the ignorant and comparatively naked labourer, who has as yet no soul above merriment, or to catch the sneer of supreme contempt on the face of his superior little kiddies, disgustingly genteel in their pink machine-sewn frocks — one has only to see this motley crowd once to realize how much the actual presence of the White Man is needed in Africa. It may be that the white races have preyed upon the black ones in the past, but never so much as the black races have preyed upon one another. Until the educated native has a higher education still, the White Man must stay there to watch him, or the education will be a curse to his more ignorant brother. The negroes will never begin to be equal to the white men until they understand they are equal among themselves.

As night approaches, the man from London who wonders where this mass of human beings will sleep and what they will sleep upon, gets his answer. They sleep where they sit, and they want nothing under them but the deck. By day the effect is that of a political meeting: they sit or stand or loll about so closely that not a square foot of planking is to be seen, except where one or other of the superior families, whose trousers and knowledge of the multiplication table impel them to hold aloof from mere men, have managed by continual sneering to secure room enough to set up their tattered deck-chairs; at night, viewed from above, the effect is that of a box of sardines freshly opened, or a hecatomb of mummies in serried rows. The sleeping Yorubas lie prone on their stomachs or on their backs, wedged close to one another, each wrapped from head to foot in his thin printed cotton cover, more as a matter of form than for any warmth required or gained. When there is no wind they are exactly like rows of mummies; when the breeze bellies out their light wraps, they are a

trembling mass, more like a cheese full of maggots than anything.

From the time they are first sighted through the telescopes on the branch-boat, to the time when they are left behind, being paddled towards the final tribulations of landing in the surf, and the Kroomen turn to with the hosepipes to wash the last vestiges of them into the sea, these labourers provide constant entertainment for the passengers; but the climax is reached when they are put over the side. The captain is in a hurry, and as it is much slower work getting a crowd down rope-ladders than up them, a sling is used to hoist them overboard. A huge tarpaulin with a ring at its four corners is spread on the deck, and about twenty of them nip into it and squat down, hugging their knees and chattering like apes. The hook from a derrick is hitched into the rings, and the signal is given to hoist. Up they go, like a handkerchief full of mushrooms; the derrick is swung over the side, and as the Krooman with the guide-line is none too careful, the rope swings well out as it is lowered. The bundle of humanity swings back, and fetches up with a bump against the side of the ship, which sets it struggling violently and convulses the passengers who are leaning over the rail to watch. Nor are they to be blamed too much for laughing, for there is very little, if any, damage done, and the niggers themselves regard the whole thing as a joke, much as yokels and factory girls enjoy the horrors of the swing-boats and razzle-dazzles in the fair. The surf-boat is rolling and rising on the swell below. It comes up, and one of the thwarts catches the bundle in the middle, dividing it into two bulges; but the hook is too high for the men in the boat to reach, and it has to be lowered for the next time. The man in charge of the donkey-engine is not particular to a few feet, and this time the tarpaulin fills the boat. Three rings are unhitched, and as the boat sinks into the trough again,

the natives are tumbled out, head over heels, all arms and legs and grinning teeth. It is a mercy that they fall in a heap, for if the first few fell on to their feet and got to one side, there would be nothing soft for the last ones to sprawl on, as the tarpaulin is hurried up into the air again for another load. They are not hurt, though, of course, they are bruised. The native always gets bruised, from the day of his birth to when he curls up in the bush to die. You never see a boy free from scars in the country. If it isn't the mark of a cut or a tear, it is the pit of a guinea-worm.

They are a happy lot; for them the world has many little troubles, but no great ones. They do not rise to the refined and mental difficulties and worries of life which civilization brings in its train, and when a great physical calamity strikes them they just collapse.

A great deal of Government work is done by the soldiers of the West African Frontier Force. These are paid a shilling a day, and there is no reason why they should not turn to and do something to keep them happy and out of mischief. They are formed into sapper companies for the making of bricks and the digging out of foundations when a town is being built. If a lot of stores are to be disembarked and there are a few companies of Hausas available, a fatigue party is marched down to the wharf. It is called a wharf, not because there is any walling or alteration of any sort to the river bank as the last flood left it; there is not even a crane; it is soon found which is the most convenient part of the bank for mooring ships to, and that is called the wharf. The soldiers take off their red zouave jackets, and sometimes their blue cotton shirts as well, and are let loose on the cargo. It is wonderful what numbers will do with the least organization imaginable.

The Government ships often have a few soldiers handy for discharging, for they are also the Government transports. Their holds will be full of timber and

corrugated iron, and on the top of that the lower deck will be packed with soldiers as close as they can sit—soldiers returning from an expedition or being moved from one garrison to another—while on the top deck the mails and kit will hardly leave the officials room to walk about. Besides this, they will generally be towing a steel barge full of cargo alongside. These ships earn their cost many times over before they get their backs broken on a sandbank, or run on to a snag or a rock, or wear out —they soon wear out. It is a very happy arrangement when they have a large cargo and a company of Hausas on board, for the Hausas are only too happy to turn to and unload the packages of roofing and bundles of uncomfortable planks they have been sprawling over for the last few days and nights. When it is all out of the way they will be more comfortable, and those who have been crowded out on to the barge alongside, and who have had to put up with the rain when it rained, and with the sun when it was overhead, will find room on the ship for the rest of the journey.

An anchor is carried ashore and buried in the sand well ahead, and the soldiers are drawn up in two lines on the top of the bank. It is dark and it is raining slightly —just about as much as it rains at home on a wet day—but the Assistant-Resident, who is on the way up to his province, has not seen this before, and is interested, so comes out of his chair and stands at the rail to watch. He sees an indiscriminate mass of creatures in rows, looking, by the gleam of a few lanterns, in their literal undress of rags and loin-cloths, something like the beetle section of an entomological collection. He is surprised to think that all these men have come from the barge and the lower deck, for, leaning over, he sees these are both apparently full of the crew, the servants, sergeants and corporals taking instructions from the quartermasters as to the unloading and the women. There is one woman to

about four men. All the carbines and accoutrements are carefully piled out of the way in the middle of the barge, and all the women at the ends. The barge has a hold about 6 feet deep, and there are two hatches, which are uncovered and show a mass of girders for corrugated iron storesheds, like light rails, about 4 inches deep.

A corporal scrambles up the bank and sends half of the front line down each hatch. Three stout landing planks are pushed out. One breaks through the sand and drops to the water's edge, but no one seems to notice it, as two are enough. The bank is steep and stands about 8 feet high, a straight cliff of clean sand being eaten away by the current. The water is not deep enough for the barge to lie quite close in, but it runs swiftly along, and masses of the sand keep falling in with a 'swish' all night. The girders are slipped out of the hold, and are clutched on each side by a regular swarm of men. There are so many hands to each girder that they seem themselves to be alive. The white man is reminded of the sticky string fly-catchers he used to see at home, as each of them rises from the top of the barge, creeps slowly along the plank with its many legs, and drops with a thud on to the sand. Having dropped one, the gang scramble down the bank and splash back through the water up to their thighs for another. The men distribute themselves along them well. If one feels he has more than his share of the weight, he screams—it is necessary to scream to be heard at all—and one or two nip over to his part.

When the girders are all gone, the barge is seen to be full of kegs of cement, packed closely together to prevent them rolling about. This is much more serious business than the girders, and the soldiers chatter a good deal before they make a start. The first difficulty is to get them out of the hold. Steel barrels, each weighing 2 hundredweight, are easy to roll along the deck and up the planks, but it is not so easy to get them loose and

hoist them the few feet from the hold. The men don't know how to begin, but the sergeant soon puts them right. He sends gangs of eight or nine into the hatches; there is room for two gangs to work in each. The men all stoop down, each lot paying attention to one particular barrel. Loosening the first few is the most difficult part of the job, and takes some time. From above, looking down from the top deck of the steamer, the hatches seem packed like the hold of a slave-dhow with black backs—a living, heaving, quivering, straining, struggling mass. Muffled groans and grunts and sharp squeals there are in plenty, for many are the trappings of fingers and the squeezings of toes while the first few barrels are worked loose and turned on to their sides to be lifted. Then each group of backs, with increased groans and cries of distress or encouragement, grows to a cone, develops a ring of woolly heads, and, like a huge sea-anemone, belches forth a blue barrel, deposits it on the side of the hatch, with cheers and shouts of glee, waves a mass of arms, like tentacles, for a moment, and, closing down, becomes again a quivering ball of shiny backs.

As soon as each barrel is banged down, shaking the barge every time, it is rolled along the deck and up the planks. It isn't hard work, but it would be a great business if one fell overboard, and the men have to be careful. There are so many passing to and fro, and the kegs are such a weight, that it seems as if first one and then another of them is certain to slip from the grasp of those rolling it; but there is always a black hand from somewhere ready to be clapped on to a wobbler and keep it straight. Natives always do handle things carefully; it is only on our own railways, where there are trucks, raised platforms, and other helps, that porters smash a man's baggage. Many a box is carried far into Africa and out again with safety, and is smashed by the railway porters within a few hours of landing in the old country.

It is careful work on the barge, and it is slow—so slow that, as the lifting gangs get them loose, there are two or three barrels waiting their turn on the edge of the hatches. It isn't at all the work the native likes; a weight of 60 pounds is his limit. The barrels are of steel, and, having been banged about a little in the many transhipments, cut his hands as he rolls them, and when they get loose in the barge and roll about, they hurt his legs.

One idiot rolls a barrel down the fallen plank to the water's edge instead of up the steep ones to the top. He feels the weight, and does not perceive that it is dragging him instead of pushing against him, so goes carefully down to the end. The Assistant-Resident calls the white sergeant's attention to this, but he says, 'They'll get it up somehow, sir'; and they do. When the idiot runs up against the solid wall—it is little more—he wipes the sand out of his face and sits on the barrel for a few minutes to take in the situation. Then he begins to scream intermittently until another man slides down the sand on to him. These two pick themselves out of the water and start tugging and straining at the keg without making the slightest impression on it, for, not being able to get a good foothold, it is more than they can lift. They give it up as a bad job, and, turning round, both scream together. This process goes on until, one by one, black forms have gathered in a cluster round the barrel, like flies on a drop of treacle, and it slowly moves up the bank, which has been trampled into a slope of about eighty degrees.

The civilian turns away from watching this incident, and walks along a few yards until he is over one of the gangs in the hatch from which there has been coming more than ordinary noise for the last few minutes. A naked nigger of splendid proportions is kicking one of the sections of the anemone with his bare toes—the honours seem about easy. However, the one below doesn't seem to think so, for, with his arms round his face, he is giving

an imitation of a steam syren which would fill a music-hall—and empty it. At last, this getting monotonous, he clings to the foot and shrieks, 'I beg you! I beg you! I beg you!' The kicker just hitches on to the side of the hatch and clears himself with his loose heel. By this time the white non-commissioned officer has jumped down on to the barge to see what it is all about. The big man gives his version of the affair; he is quivering with rage. The little one shrieks, 'He lie! he lie! he lie!' until he either has no breath left or prefers silence to the non-commissioned officer's stick. The poor beggar probably has a 2-hundredweight keg on his foot all the time; if so, it is the affair of Providence, for no mortal can hope to discern justice in the general din, and the little man will get his reward, for he will be in hospital with a hearty appetite for some weeks. The civilian sees all this, and while he has every confidence in the non-commissioned officer, whom he has found to be a right-minded young chap and popular with his men all the trip, he isn't at all sure that he ought not to interfere in what appears to him to be such a palpable bit of brutality. He temporizes by saying over the rail, 'Is that man an officer?' indicating the kicker. 'Yes, sir, he's a sergeant.' 'I thought so. He seemed a little annoyed.' 'Yes, he's lost his wool over something; but he's the best man we've got. They'll be friends again to-morrow.'

The civilian falls asleep with the cries and howls, the cheers and laughter, of the men in his ears, for after the barge is empty there is the hold of the ship, and the noise continues far into the night. In the morning he wakes to find the sun high, and the ship riding light between banks burdened with the most superb vegetation. That is the way of the world. The man who gets up late, the man who travels on the top deck, sees the sun high up, drinks in the glorious landscape, admires the crested wash astern which breaks the glass of the river into silvered

ridges, feels the pleasant vibration of the paddle-wheels and the gentle breeze, and says to himself: 'How good everything is! How wonderful is the organization which, without apparent effort, produces such comfortable results!' He does not lean over the rail now. He does not go below. But there, nevertheless, one man is crying quietly to himself, and nursing a foot which the wisest medicine-man in the company cannot understand; there, nevertheless, a dozen are tearing strips of flannel from the bottom of their shirts, and smearing palm-oil and guinea corn-flour over knuckles and knees; there, nevertheless, one is trimming off bits of his toe with a knife, and another is wondering why his ear, which feels so small to his fingers, feels so big to his brain.

There is always trouble underneath, and there always will be, so long as human beings have to do hard work with their bodies. So long as arms of flesh and bone have to lift weights there will be sprains; so long as goods are moved about on heads there will be aches. That is why machinery is on a higher plane. That is why machinery means progress. Every new machine, every idea which enables work hitherto done by hand to be done by steel, carries us another step further from the animal. For this reason alone it is a sad thought that labour is so cheap in places like Northern Nigeria. A machine will work day and night, and calls for no sympathy; we are not sorry for it even when it breaks down; it never needs compassion; the human labourer does. It will be a fine day for progress when even the Hausas mind machinery, and pull the levers of looms, cranes, locomotives, and steam-navvies. The mechanical engineer does more for humanity than the medical scientist.

CHAPTER IX

TRADE PROSPECTS

An immense possibility—Sentiment and business—What the Hausa wants—A system of commercial travelling required—Opening for capital—Necessity to study tastes of customers—Quality will win—What can be got in exchange: oils, copra, and general produce to-day—Cotton to come—Foodstuffs to follow—Minerals to be picked up—A big thing, which others will take if we don't.

FEW people realize how immense are the results of the comparatively bloodless occupation of Kano and Sokoto early this year by Sir Frederick Lugard, how vast is the scope provided by it for our enterprise, how large is the market waiting for our manufacturers, how great are the possibilities of exchange. The population of the Hausa States is estimated at from 20,000,000 to 30,000,000, and whatever it may be, from the look of the villages, from the way the countless villages are swarming with children, it will rather increase than anything else. The natives are not savages, and their clothes are superb, heavy with needlework. True, they wear them until the colour has faded, until the hems are ragged, and until the embroidery is frayed and worn to a blur; but this is only because the clothes are so dear. A tope costs anything from 30s. to £15, and when we know that 3d. a day is a comfortable subsistence for a man and his family, we see that the buying of a new tope is not lightly to be undertaken by the ordinary man. A tope sometimes costs as much as a wife—and a wife works.

We can provide the Hausas with clothes cheaper than they have ever known them before. They grow cotton, spin thread, and weave cloth on tiny hand-looms of bygone ages in strips 2 inches wide. These ribbons are sewn together by hand and made into a wide-sleeved tope, with about as much fit in it as there is in a barrister's gown. This is covered with needlework to order, and that and the finish of the hem constitute the value of the completed article—white cotton needlework on blue cloth, or green cloth needlework on white cloth, until sometimes its weight is nearly doubled. Then the purchaser, whether he be a common labourer or a Prince of Bida, strolls out to display it, moving his shoulders every step he takes, to make the skirt spread out to its full extent.

We can make this needlework with our machinery. A lace manufacturer at Nottingham was recently shown some embroidery from Bida way, and asked whether he could turn out something to imitate it. He fingered it, and said: 'Certainly; and if I can't, they will at Plauen. But what a *sin* to stop work of this kind and teach them to use cheap and nasty machine-made stuff instead.' There is some truth in that, but a good deal of sentiment. It is not business; and while the imitation may be cheap, there is no reason why it should be nasty. The old pillow-lace is still to some finer than the best machine-made lace, and to some it seems a sin to imitate it; but the machine is a distinct advance upon the pillow; it is a step in the progress of civilization. With our looms and our lace-machines we can make thousands while the Hausa patiently makes one; we can ship them on the Mersey, transfer them to stern-wheelers at the Delta, run them right away up the Niger and Kaduna Rivers to the end of the Zungeru Railway, and sell or barter them to the countless caravans of the Soudan. We can do it; and if we don't the Germans will.

We can provide the Hausas with their household

utensils cheaper than they can make them themselves, and that although they have been making them since the Moors held Spain, and in spite of them having the tin at their doors. At present they hammer them out of thin metal sheets themselves, using nothing more than a hammer and an upright ¾-inch bar of iron for an anvil. They punch patterns all over them, solder them together, and ornament them with washes of brass and copper. We can stamp them out like buttons at Birmingham—bowls and basins of all sizes. There is no need to ornament them; no need to cover them with the abominations of machine art, with decorations in the style of 'A Present from Blackpool.' They will ornament them for themselves, and will probably pay quite as much for the plain articles as they would for things covered with patterns which they don't understand. We can make them plates and dishes, jugs, pans, ladles, spoons, mugs, and enamelware of all possible kinds, especially basins and bowls as large and light as the calabashes Nature provides for the gathering, but more durable and more easily cleaned.

We can make them tools of all kinds. The Hausas have been, and still are, a nation of craftsmen, just as they have been, and still are, a nation of traders. We can make them hoes cheaper and better than the ones they make now out of virgin iron or ore which is so rich that they can smelt it for themselves with their wood fuel. We can make them mattocks, hatchets, hammers, chisels, embossing tools—everything, in fact, that workers in tin, brass, hardwood, leather, and cloth require. We can make knives for them, straightforward, sharp-pointed sheath-knives, such as every Hausa man, boy, or woman wears, and there is no need for us to expend energy over a hinge. They have used the sheath-knife for centuries; they can hang it round their necks, stick it into their belt, or fasten it to their forearm with a bracelet—they like to have it handy, and they have no breeches pocket.

We can sell them soap made out of their own palm-oils. They are very clean in their persons. They use their national natural toothbrush of fibrous stick during the first hour of the day regularly; they wash daily, and carefully remove all other substances before anointing themselves with oils picked out with the antimony paste they love. They make soap for themselves, and very nasty stuff it looks, like the darkest engine-grease—'black man soap,' the boys call it. One sees common bar soap for sale in all the markets, and the price is high; and when one is told that the copra and other nasty-smelling matter is shipped home to be used in making olive-oil, soap, cattle-cake, and other useful things, when one sees labour and living so cheap all round, one is apt to wonder whether it might not be profitable to start soap factories in Lagos.

We have sent cloth to the Coast for years, and it is only reasonable to presume that we can now sell it in the Soudan wherever the traders to-day take the celebrated Kano cloth. This should be copied as closely as possible and improved upon, for it was perhaps being made there or at Katsena long before the art came to us; and the Soudanese like stripes and some kinds of patterns better than plain stuffs. They have their own dyes, which we can surely improve upon. If we can't, the Germans can. If we are to secure the market in this or in any other commodity, we must take the trouble to ascertain what the Hausas want. They are not quite like the Coast negro, to whom we came as a kind of god or superior being altogether, and who was only too willing to imitate us, even in our vices. They have had a civilization of their own, and will regard us as outsiders — outsiders with wonderful 'ju-ju,' outsiders who are indisputably having our day, but outsiders still. We must study their needs, not preach to them. It will pay us well. It would pay us even to send out men to inquire what is needed, just as the native traders do in Morocco, when they make two

distinct journeys through a district, the first to find out what is wanted and the second to take it.

It will pay us well to find out carefully what is wanted, for the market of Northern Nigeria is not merely the market for the Hausa States, it is the market for the whole of the Soudan. The traders of Kano travel North Africa with their caravans, from the Nile and Tripoli to Timbuctoo and the Congo. The Hausas have been the traders, the travelling traders, of North Africa for century after century in the past, and will be so for century after century in the future. We shall never do the retailing and distributing of the Soudan; we shall only be the wholesale merchants, the importers, and the exporters. There is no room for the small white trader in the Hausa States. The White Men must be prepared to trade in a large way, or not at all. It is doubtful whether even the educated Coast natives will be able to hold their own against the Hausas. They say that if a man has three millions he can make a fortune on the Niger, which may sound paradoxical, but is absolutely true. The carper exclaims: 'But if I had three millions I should no longer wish for a fortune.' Perhaps he would not. If so, it is good for the world that the millions were not allotted to him in the great scheme, and it is good for the world that there are men possessing millions who still want more, and to get more must use their millions in legitimate commerce.

There is abundant opening for capital up the Niger, but not for small sums. There is room for steamers on the sea, for harbours on the shore, for stern-wheelers on the rivers, for workshops and sawmills on the banks, for railways everywhere, and without them trade can hardly be secured. At present the Government is making railways, but that is not as it should be, and inasmuch as the country is developed for the traders, the British taxpayer would no doubt prefer that the trader should build the

railways, and would, judging from the way he squanders his savings on the cormorants of the stock and share market, probably be more easily induced to lend the necessary money to properly constructed and conducted companies, than to dribble it out through the House of Commons, the Lords of the Treasury, the Colonial Office, and the Crown Agents. Railways up from the Niger into the past and present commercial centre of the Soudan should be fairly safe investments.

This is only a faint suggestion of one side of the picture as it appears to a man who knows hardly anything about business, less about Africa, and nothing about the employment of capital. It may be that the Hausas and the Soudanese will be too conservative to take even the closest imitation of the goods they have been accustomed to buy for so long. It may be that nothing we can make in our factories will please them. Then the Germans must try what they can do, and perhaps they will succeed where we fail, as they have so often done before. The thought suggests itself to the man without experience that the Hausas, as a people, may be entirely different from the Coast negroes, whom they despise, and that it may not prove profitable to simply dump up-river into Northern Nigeria the cloths and patterns which sell well, or are out of date, in the stores on the other side of the Forest Belt. The Coast boy, for instance, delights in a large check, a good striking contrast, too—red and yellow for choice. He likes a pattern—extra large vermilion roses with yellow leaves on a spotted gray background, or a pea-green ship under full sail on a purple sea, or a dog's head, a basket of fruit, an umbrella, or a pig, repeated *ad infinitum*. He struts about as much besplashed and embellished with emblems as a circus clown. It may be that the Hausas will also take a fancy to this style of thing; it may be that they, too, will be pleased to deck themselves out in all colours of the rainbow, with a land-

scape in the foreground. But the thought suggests itself that if in the past they have been accustomed to make for themselves more sober stripes of blue and black upon the dull white of their coarse bleached threads, or mathematical patterns in green, tastefully set off in white, and all reds toned down to rich dark shades—well, perhaps it would be better to try them with something of that sort first, until they are educated up to the other. At present, at all events, they may prefer it, and be more willing to work for it. One thing is certain, and that is, that if they don't want a Noah's ark on their cloth to-day, it will take a lot of time and cost a lot of money to educate them into it, and it may be better to be content with making the plain stripes for them until, in the natural course of evolution up to our standard, they reach the desire for realism on calico.

Again, we must give them value for their money. We may make the cloth as cheap as we can, we may turn it out for as little per yard as the latest inventions in looms will allow, but we must give them value for money. They are no fools. They are not so ignorant as we found the pagans on the Coast. They were, perhaps, bartering and cheapening when the Romans discovered us; they were certainly right in the thick of such poor civilization as the world had attained when William the Norman brought a little of its light to us. If we think we can fool them with starch and stiffening, we make a mistake. If we try it on, we shall lose the best market our enterprise has opened for our wares since India, and a richer one.

It is a rich market, and that is a very great point. It is rich in natural products, and rich in labour. It will grow richer, and that is a greater point still. Its soil is inexhaustible if anything in this world is inexhaustible, and it has mineral resources of immense value. It is a tremendous market, and it has plenty to offer in exchange. A mere market is supposed to be a bad thing. As a

matter of fact, there is no such thing as a mere market without an accumulation of the accepted currency. People who want things but have nothing to give in exchange are not a market, though they may be nursed into one; they may be taught to produce or make something to offer in exchange. Northern Nigeria has plenty to offer in exchange to-day, and it can be taught to produce more for the future. To-day we can get rubber (only in small quantities, but it is there; they say the region south of the Benue River is full of it); we can get palm-oil, copra, fibre, tin (it is to be picked up; the only difficulty is transport), antimony, lead and silver; we can get peppers, shea-butter, gum and guinea grain.

In the immediate future—that is to say, for the fetching—we can get leather. The Morocco leather of commerce comes from the country round Kano. Red is the most common colour; yellow and white comes next; green is the most costly. It is good leather. At present we get it through the Mediterranean. It is carried on camels at infinite risk across the desert to Tripoli, and to the ports of Morocco, whence it gets its name. We have only to go to Kano and fetch it; the road is clear. The trade will be diverted to the coast, and the customs collected on it will help to make a revenue for the country, so that it can get away from the control of Downing Street, and become a self-governing colony like the others, so that it need not trouble an unwilling House of Commons for the few hundred thousand pounds a year so long—the few hundred thousand pounds a year which a third-rate town in the Midlands can raise for current expenses quietly and off-hand over and above the money it sinks in permanent works.

Looking a little further into the future, the hope of the British Empire in the Protectorate is in cotton. Of this a great deal has been said, and something is being done. It is obvious that a country which has grown cotton for

itself and for much of North Africa for centuries ought to be capable of producing cotton for us. It is indigenous, but it is not now so good as the American cotton; but America is less and less able to produce for us what we want. The Hausas are accustomed as a nation to growing cotton, and if we cannot show them how to improve it to make it fit for us, then we are not so clever or enterprising as we were when we were working our way up among the nations.

We might get bananas or banana-flour. Wasn't it Stanley who said that banana-flour would be the food of the future? There is a market, undoubtedly, in England for bananas. There are difficulties to-day which make it impossible to bring Niger bananas to Covent Garden; but there have been difficulties over other things elsewhere, and they have not been insurmountable. We have not always got plantains from Jamaica; we have not always got butter from New Zealand. Indian corn or maize is to be had for the planting; guinea grain can be had for the asking; the rice crop is sometimes not gathered because there is plenty without it, and beans are not to be despised. As the world fills up, foodstuffs are being fetched greater distances. Northern Nigeria has a soil that cannot be approached for fertility, and the time may come when even its beans may be worth considering, especially those brought to all the village markets, some of which, as large as our broad beans, and quite white and tasteless, are much appreciated by white men travelling about. With a fertile and populous country there need be no fear of the native not producing enough of suitable natural products with which to buy our goods.

Looking further into the future still, the country, or a large part of it, is almost solid iron. Iron ore by itself is hardly worth fetching away, and it will be a long time before it becomes more than a possibility in the natural wealth of Hausaland; but it is there when wanted. In

Lokoja, for instance, and right up the Niger to the Kaduna, the roads and paths literally rust in the rains. Iron ore by itself is only a future asset; without coal, or some substitute for smelting, it cannot be turned into account to-day. There may be no coal, but we haven't looked for it yet; we haven't even looked for water; we are still boiling that oozing from the surface springs, and condensing that flowing down the river. We must bore for water first, then pure water may perhaps drive some of the fever away, and we may even have energy to look for coal. If we do find it, the iron will not be allowed to rust long, and with the millions of Hausas, Nupes, Yorubas, and Pagans not averse to work—it is a big picture.

It is a big picture indeed; but the products of the present and the immediate future will suffice for all we have to offer. We shall export cloth, woven goods, tools, hardware, machinery, ornaments, and public works of all kinds; we shall import oils, rubber, ivory, tin, cotton, leather and foodstuffs. The market is a tremendous one; it is opened, it is ready. It has not been damaged a bit by its acquisition. There has been no devastation, no decimation, no waste, no impoverishment; it has been acquired by a *coup*. Sir Frederick Lugard reported immediately after reaching Kano that the markets were in full swing, which in Northern Nigeria meant that the people had confidence in the security of property under our rule, which is everything. We can benefit if we will; if we are too apathetic, if we do not care to venture, others will.

CHAPTER X

PADDY'S BROTHER

Paddy's value—A short-cut—An angry crowd, and a narrow escape—The explanation, human sacrifice—The story-book and real life—The White Man's mission—The map—Spreading influence—Strong rule useful—Sokoto, and after—Minerals or cotton and foodstuffs—The British Administration—Robbery by violence and by bluff—Paddy introduces his brother—The man and his grievance—Paddy's devotion—Off on palaver—How the Lieutenant lost a boy and found one—How Paddy lost his brother—At Zaria—To Kano—Bebeji—Swift retribution and its effect—At Kano's gates—The prison—Death and madness—Light—The story.

PADDY'S wages had gradually crept up while he was in the service of white men, from the few shillings he was paid by his first master, the Irish British non-commissioned officer who named him when he knew no English at all, to the £2 10s. a month he got from the newly-appointed Assistant-Resident. Two pounds ten shillings was a lot of money for an up-country boy, but Paddy earned every penny of it; he was invaluable. He was the salvation of his master from the day of his engagement at Burutu, when he promptly put up his brand new mosquito net in what had proved on the way down-river to be the only dry corner of the Government steamer to the day when he stalked down to the wharf at Lokoja to see him off. On that occasion he was followed by a woman bearing a calabash full of bananas, paw-paw, and

other fresh fruit and vegetables, which he was just able to slip on board with the words, 'I dash you, sah,' before the plank was pulled in and the steamer swung away out into the current, and headed down-stream with the Assistant-Resident hopeful of promotion and hungry for home after his first tour.

On the way out in the ocean boat the passengers had told those who were going there what a God-forsaken place Northern Nigeria was for white men; and officers bound for Lagos and Old Calabar had commiserated with them for having to go up into a country where they would have to live in huts like niggers, and where the only servants obtainable were runaway thieves from the Coast, or wild bushmen with cannibalism for their religion. The young man found, however, that, just as the despised native-built hut was, when sufficiently large and cleanly kept, very comfortable quarters—perhaps more comfortable in that climate than a stone or brick house with a staircase—so, too, a man could be better and more faithfully served by the intelligent offspring of a Hausa household than he might be by the Coast boy who had not yet run away.

He met Paddy on the hulk in Forcados River, and, as luck would have it, there was no other boy available, struck a bargain with him which he thought he could ill afford, but which he never regretted for a moment. He saw other men without boys, or changing them frequently, he heard bitter complaints at the various messes he joined, and, when in authority for a short time as Resident at Lokoja, had several cases of theft to deal with; but he himself had no complaints to make; his small household was well ordered, and though men told him he was paying an absurd and exorbitant wage, and some went so far as to blame him for spoiling the market by such extravagance, he knew himself that it was wise, and held his peace about it.

Everything wasn't always right; no one could expect that; but if there was anything wrong, Paddy was always ready with a plausible excuse and reason for it. When the blankets on the bed were damp, as they sometimes were in tornado weather, it was because there had been so little sun during the day that the small-boy had been told to leave them on the wall until the afternoon, and had foolishly forgotten them altogether until it was dark and the dew had fallen, or because a hurricane had broken unexpectedly while Paddy was at the market after breakfast and the small-boy had been too intent upon running for shelter to remember them; and then the rain had fallen all afternoon, and the kitchen roof leaked so much that they would not get dry at all. Sometimes the kettle for his evening bath was cold or late, but that was when some fool-man had brought green sticks from the bush instead of dry ones, or when the small-boy had dropped the matches out of the canoe and been afraid to confess until the last moment—the moment when the kettle was called for. The white man heard these excuses patiently and believed in them, and as the small-boy learned his work there was less cause for complaint. He often wondered whether his friends who complained so bitterly were not themselves largely to blame for expecting too much.

Paddy very soon learned he was trusted, and in response watched his master and all that was his like a dog. He did his best because he felt he was appreciated, and the difference between real and perfunctory service meant more than the white man knew. When Paddy insisted on having a canoe that did not leak—no, not a drop—for the journey up to Bida by water when there was no steamer available; when he selected safe camping places for the night, insisted on the canoemen pushing on another half-mile until they reached a high, clean sandbank, on which there were no bushes, no mud patches, and no traces of crocodile; when he regularly visited the market

himself early to secure fruit and vegetables and fish, and even walked to the nearest villages in search of them rather than have none for the table; in all this he was as assuredly preserving his master's life as he was when he did most undoubtedly save him from a violent death in the turbulent district between Bautshi and Bida.

That was one of those many occasions in African life which are not heard of, because, though very near it, they were not actually disastrous. Hair-breadth escapes are known of and talked about for years at the mess and on the verandas, but they do not get into official reports, nor are they cabled home to Reuter's. The Assistant-Resident had been sent to see about labour for the telegraph-laying at Keffi, and, having got everything in order, and the Public Works man having turned up and taken over his duties from him, he had decided to strike across the country to Bida, where he knew there was abundance of work waiting for him, rather than march down the way he had come up to the Benue, and spend the length of time necessary in drifting down-stream to Lokoja and poling up the Niger. He marched with Paddy and five carriers through the first few villages without occasioning more than a passing interest, and the women came out to meet him at the gates of the towns bringing the usual stuff to sell; but as he got further away from the beaten track of the trade route he noticed a difference. The people working in the fields began to run into the villages when they saw him coming, and one village was quite deserted when he reached it, though there were evident signs that the daily life had been in full swing just an hour or so before.

At one he noticed several men brandishing their long light hunting-spears, and talking excitedly together; and as he approached the next, in which he could hear tom-toms beating and horns blowing, he saw a great crowd of men coming along the path to meet him. They filled the

path and overflowed into the bush on both sides. At first he thought they would pass him, but Paddy told him they came to make palaver, and it would be best to turn back. At this he said 'Rubbish!' and passed on. When he met the crowd, he saw they were very much in earnest about something, and then his horse became restive, and several hands stretched out and gripped the reins.

In a few moments he was quite surrounded, and looked from his saddle into a sea of angry faces, pressing close on all sides, with the one thought, 'This is death.' The mob were quiet, and Paddy, himself taking hold of the bridle to keep the horse still whether his master wished it or not, threw his great straw hat back over his shoulder with a jerk of his head, and began to harangue the crowd in a loud voice, with much waving of his loose arm and much, apparently good-humoured, chaff, until the white man, slightly dazed and before he knew what was happening, found he was being led along a path which bore to the left away from the village, with his carriers huddled close behind him, and Paddy still shouting a chaffing word every now and then to the villagers, who followed at an ever-increasing distance.

The little party camped in the bush that night, and for the next few nights as well, Paddy carefully avoiding the villages altogether. When asked what the fuss was all about, he either could not or would not tell. They were silly fool-men, he said—mere bush-cow, who didn't know the White Man.

The Resident at Bida was more serious about it, and scolded the younger man for travelling without instructions or advice across a bit of the province which had not yet been visited.

'But why on earth should they have stopped me?' asked the young man. 'I had no soldiers with me. What were they afraid of?'

'Perhaps they were holding a festival, and thought you were coming to stop it.'

'Why should I want to stop it? You don't mean they were cannibals?'

'No, but probably human sacrifice.'

'Then I *ought* to have stopped it. Fool that I was to let Paddy bring me away!'

'Don't be so sure of that. Paddy knows more of this country than you do yet.'

'But you don't mean to say that I, an Englishman, oughtn't to have——'

'My dear boy, that sounds very well in Exeter Hall, or in a schoolboy's gift-book—galloping into the frightened town, blazing away right and left with your shooting-iron, striking terror into the hearts of the circle of worshippers, winging the high priest even as his arm is uplifted for the fatal blow, snatching the victim from the bloodstained altar, and then leaping the prostrate forms and crashing to safety through the dense undergrowth—have you ever tried galloping through the bush when the grass is ten feet high?—or swimming a torrent—the Niger in flood, for example—with the new man Friday slung across your shoulder—and so on—all very pretty in the story-book; but, come now, how much of that *could* you have done in this case?'

The younger man had flushed up at this, and dug his fork into the table; but he thought of that sea of faces into which he had looked once—once, never to forget it—and said nothing.

'Don't be annoyed with me,' said the Resident, getting up from the table and walking up and down near it in the moonlight; 'I've been through all that. Of course, I know you are an Englishman—so am I. All the instincts of an Englishman impel you to rush in on occasions like that. I felt the same myself when I came across my first corpse. It was lying in the path within a hundred yards

of a village—a corpse with its head split to the chin—and the villagers professed to know nothing about it, or even who the man was when he was alive, or where he lived, or anything. They said they knew nothing about it, just as if it had dropped from the skies; and the blood was still running over the nose. I believe to this day it was some poor beggar running out to meet me with a complaint. I was sure the headman of the village was in it, though he came out to me when he saw I had stopped, and expressed the greatest surprise when he saw what I was stopping for. I could tell he was lying. At the inquiry I held he was watching his people like a cat watching mice. None of them dare say anything. It wasn't because they didn't know. I wanted to hang him right away on the nearest tree, but the Lieutenant in charge of my escort reminded me of the general instructions to Residents. I sent him down to Lokoja for trial, and he got off for want of evidence. I was reprimanded by the Chief Justice through headquarters for preferring such a serious charge without evidence. The case was reported home, and may have delayed my promotion. No, I had no evidence; but I *knew*. I knew as well as if I had seen the blow struck. Well, he got off, and came back; how could I prevent him? He came back to rule his little principality, and ten months later he was found in his inner chamber one morning with his throat cut. They said one of his women did it, and hailed her before me; but I decided there was no evidence, and she ran away.'

'Don't you think that she in her turn was made away with?'

'No, I don't, and I'll tell you why. My interpreter sent her down-river to her own people, and that cost me twenty-five shillings, so I know.

'But, to come back to this matter of human sacrifice, I've no doubt about it. You would have most certainly been killed; you know it. So would Paddy, so would

your carriers. And to what end? To the glory of the name of an Englishman? Why, nine out of ten men sitting in their clubs in London, hearing the story—the story of the murder in a native village of a peaceful, travelling white man—would suggest with a sneer that perhaps it served you right, that perhaps you were drunk and ran amok, or perhaps you had broken some harem regulation or other. So much for those who stop at home and measure us out here by their own standards. And how about the result here? The priests and chiefs would have inflamed the people far and wide, just as they inflamed the mob you met, and they would probably have resisted the punitive expedition and carried slaughter —to themselves.

'Of course, we should have had to send a punitive expedition. The prestige of the White Man in Africa must be upheld at all costs, or none of us would be safe. There are so few of us that we must keep our persons sacred. This expedition, however successful, would have stirred up those good friends at home who hate us; would have cost money which is wanted, and badly wanted, as you know, for peaceful transport and Court work. It might have upset the general scheme of military movements shaping at headquarters right through. It might have set flame to all that we are straining every nerve to extinguish while it is still but smouldering. From beginning to end, in whatever way you look at it, it would have stayed the march of progress to we can't tell *what* extent. . . . My dear boy, you would have been cursed for a fool at home, at headquarters, and by me.'

'But aren't we here to civilize this hell upon earth?' said the younger man, peeling a ripe banana so viciously that it collapsed in his fingers, so that Paddy behind him gasped, and he had to take another. 'And surely human sacrifice is not civilization!'

'In the first place, this is not exactly a hell upon earth.

Think of it. We are in perhaps *the* most fertile tract of the whole wide earth, the tract which is capable of producing more solid food per acre than any other. It is teeming with people now, and has been teeming with people for ages. And why? Because the soil is so rich that food is simply chucked at those who care to scratch its surface and plant seed. Look how the people feed. And was there ever known to be a famine in the land? No; we can't call a country in which food is so plentiful a hell upon earth. And as for human sacrifice, of course it is dead against our ideas of civilization, utterly incompatible with them; and of course we must stop it by all practicable manner of means.'

'Then, I ought to have done what I could out there?'

'You did what you could, and you know it. You could do nothing, and you know it. It would have been folly to have done more. It was folly to go at all. As a matter of fact, your coming and peaceful going on will probably make it easy for you to go later on. There is a time for all things. Fetch me a map.'

The younger man went and fetched a map from his office-table, and moved into a deck-chair alongside the one in which he found his chief on returning. He spread the map out and they stooped over it together as soon as Paddy had moved the lamp.

'Now, look here. We have come up the river to Lokoja. You don't remember Quendon. I do. Well, we are established for ever at Lokoja. We are at Loko. We are at Ibi. We are at Illorin. There is no murder to-day unpunished at those places, or within an area round them. The areas are extending every year. Each tour the Residents make in the Provinces extends the areas. That's what the tours are for. They are planned for that—planned for gradual expansion, sound expansion. To be sound, to be lasting, expansion must be gradual.

'Broadly speaking, the Province of Illorin is pacified.

The Resident there can travel all over his Province in safety. His main duty is assessing the tribute each village, each town, each petty principality must pay to the Emir over it. Good government is spreading. First control, then good government. Without control good government is impossible. That's why there is bad government up north and round us. There is no control—neither ours nor from Sokoto.

'Kabba is quiet, but there will be trouble there some day if it is left too long. The Resident is kept too busy with work at Lokoja, which ought to have a Resident to itself, a man with nothing to manage but Lokoja, with his Assistant-Resident at Burutu. But that is by the way. The Resident is so busy with work at his headquarters, and they do say, too, with bickerings and quarrellings between the soldiers and the civilians, to move about much; but that will come.

'Across the river there is the Bassa Province. That is backward. It is rich in rubber and mahogany, and there are elephants—though those aren't much use to it. This country is, fortunately, too unhealthy to attract the big-game hunter. Fortunately for progress, this country will never be a big-game preserve for Europe. But with all its wealth, Bassa is backward. It isn't so peaceful, so controlled, as our own Province of Bida, bad as you have just found it. That's why you will find headquarters always sending an ex-military man into it. Bassa is backward, but it must wait. We are at Lokoja. We are at Loko. We are up and down the Niger. We are up and down the Benue. We are all round it. It can't run away. Its anarchy, its paganism, its man-catching and man-eating—none of these can spread, and our influence can.

'So much for the south; now see how we are approaching the north. You see, we have been at Jebba, here on the north-west, for some years. We came up the river. We built a small town on the hill and a big military

camp on the island. No one attacked us—no, not even though we were dominated by the great "Ju-Ju" Rock, which was reported to be proof against all the "ju-jus" of the White Man. We shelled it for practice. We stopped, and our influence spread—spread down back south to help the influence of Illorin, back to the Lagos Railway, and up north-west to Illo towards Sokoto, and further west.

'Then, see, we went to Kontagora after coming to Bida. You know all about our coming. There was fighting, but not much. There might have been more. There would have been more if the people had been well governed, well organized, and as hostile to our coming as their Emir was. But they weren't. They wanted us. They brought their complaints to us wherever we went. Now, we have worked up to Zungeru, and through to Zaria. Every ship, every canoe passing up the Kaduna is laden with stores, warlike and otherwise, and building material. The railway to Wushishi has paid its cost and more already, and it's not yet properly ballasted.

'We have pushed up to Bautshi, as you know, on the east, and on through Gudjba to Kuka itself. Kuka used to be a mighty city, a caravan centre, a beehive. We found it a heap of ruins, utterly deserted, raided and raided until it had gone. We went to Yola, right away back in 1901. There was fighting there, and we lost one or two men. We fought the Emir's slaves, poor beggars! no one else. The people were glad enough to have us to stop.

'Now look at the whole map, and see what this means. Don't you see how we have spread like a hand? Wherever we are there we are safe. We have never been attacked at one of our posts. One reason may be, the great reason undoubtedly is, that we are a blessing to every place we go to. We don't *live on the land* as the French have to. We pay for all we take, and we take nothing by force, and there is plenty. And we find employment and unaccustomed wages for the people living thereabouts, and more,

so that where we have a post there is soon a biggish town and market. Look how we have spread our posts at intervals all over the land. Between the posts there is anarchy. . . .'

'That's just it,' said the younger man, straightening his back and then lying back in his chair. 'We have pushed an administration all over the shop, but its only a skeleton administration after all.'

'Nothing of the sort. Call it a net, if you like. It's far too lively for a skeleton; there's nothing dead about it. But you interrupted me. There is anarchy in the districts lying between the posts. For instance, south of Illo, and west of Jebba, in the Province of Borgu, there is to-day much man-catching. The work there is all the more difficult because of the international frontier. Malefactors of all kinds escape across from both sides and cannot be followed. Do you see, for example, that an Englishman ought not to interfere with cannibalism or even human sacrifice which he hears is going on over the border in the French sphere? But, to get on: there is much catching of women and children for slaves there; but the trouble can't spread. It is hemmed in by Illorin and the Niger, and can be dealt with at leisure. Borgu was once the worst part of the whole country. It was never conquered by the Fulani at all. Lugard was not the first white man to go into it, but he was the first white man to come out of it. He went, and he came back, and he brought a trading treaty with him. Some say he came out by sheer luck. You know something about him and his luck. Some call it luck; it really is the habit of doing the right thing at the right moment. That treaty meant a good deal to us.

'There is want of control in the Kontagora Province, but not much. The Resident has made a preliminary census of all the decent towns in it, which is more than we can do, as you have just found out. The chief sinner there

was the old Emir of Kontagora himself. He was always raiding. But he ruled his district so strongly that when we broke his power we took it over well under control, so to speak, and our authority was accepted as fully as his had been.

'Now, south-east of us here at Bida, and all between us and Bautshi, there is practically no control at all; but it is all cut off, or will be as soon as we have marched a force across from Bautshi to Zaria. The new post at Zaria helps all that district by cutting it off from Kano. In fact, boil it down, and it comes to this: there are many unsettled areas, but they can all wait. So long as we are strong at our posts and the communications are open the unrest won't spread, and the influence from the posts will. It really is wonderful how the posts have crept up. Lokoja, Jebba, Bida, Zungeru, Zaria—it will be Kano next year, and Sokoto perhaps the year after that.'

'Why Sokoto?' asked the young man.

'So long as Sokoto is as it is, so long you will have trouble such as yours in all these areas. There cannot be two powers in the land, unless they are on the same basis. We are built on the basis of civilization by humanity, by freedom, and by justice for all; Sokoto is built on civilization by cruelty, by slavery, and brute force naked. We are to help the people, Sokoto to use them. We want trade, Sokoto wants slaves. We want them to work and exchange what they gather for what we make; Sokoto wants to take what they gather and the gatherers as well. Again, when we are at Sokoto, when once we sit there, and, side by side with the old power, rule the land through the old power, by the old power as well as by our own, the old power purged and cleansed, but the same old power for the people, in the eyes of the people, in the minds of the people, then we shall stop all this cruelty, murder, injustice, not with mad, quixotic martyrdoms, followed by punitive expeditions, but by proclamations,

framed by us, sealed by Sokoto, proclaimed by the rightful local Emir whom the people have been accustomed to obey, and enforced by the local courts, which, of course, you know used to be, and will be again, established from end to end of the land. Mark you, it will be no easy business then, even when the power of Sokoto is added to the power of the White Man; it will still be no easy task, it will still be hard work, as all work for lasting good is; men will still be worn out at it as they are now, but they will do more than they can do now; they will civilize the whole 300,000 square miles of it—it will be possible, at present it isn't possible.'

'And then, what then?' said the young man. 'We shall get the gold-miner, and the diamond-seeker, and they will take possession of the country and the people, and make them work whether they want to or not, by force of circumstance, and kill them off. We shall substitute a labour contract for the slavery, the mission for the priest. *Cui bono?*'

'Nothing of the sort. Tut, tut! You sound like a Parliamentary Opposition *pro tem.*—it doesn't matter which party's out, curse them! We may make a mess of the labour contract if we don't try to think how the people think, but if we do it will be our own fault. We have the experience of other countries to guide us. However bad a labour contract is, it can never be so bad as slavery. Wait until you have seen as much of slavery as I have. And as for missions, whatever put those into your head? They will not actively interfere with the people. There will be no enforced conversion. It is doubtful to what extent they will be allowed at all. Anyway, I guess the people won't worry much about them. Haven't you grasped that the Hausa is not a Kroo? They will do them some good, and amuse them more. The people have survived and absorbed the Mohammedan missionary, and he came with the sword. Certainly the Christian

mission won't hold monthly sacrificial entertainments for the benefit of wandering Englishmen.

'But, seriously, I know what you mean, and agree with you so far as you mean to go. Everyone who realizes how happy the simple savage is while his happiness lasts, and how short his trouble is when it comes, feels something of the sort—a kind of feeling that civilization will only add to his pleasures by the sweat of his brow, and give him bodily safety at the price of old age. They are looking for gold—men who, if they find it, will try to rob the native here, and if they don't, will try to fleece the speculating public at home; and—let me whisper this in confidence, if confidence is possible in this weird place—*I hope they won't find it.* I speak as the friend of my poor Hausa —my strong-limbed, upright, laughing, feckless Hausa. For if they do, what will it mean? It might mean a screaming, unhealthy, tearing, wearing rush of so-called prosperity—big export figures, and all that. My poor Hausa would be dazzled and befogged with it all. He might come off badly, and might hate us in the end. No; they are looking for gold, and they are talking of diamonds; they may find them, but whether they do or not, the real wealth of the country, the real value of this bit of the earth to mankind, is not its minerals. It is its fertility. Its greatest value will be as agricultural land, as a food-producing tract, in twenty years' time; and its immediate value is as a cotton-field — not for the gamblers of the Stock Exchange, but for the mill-hands of Lancashire. If ever this country is put up for sale, and Lancashire doesn't buy it, then Lancashire will deserve to be ruined by foreign competition. The Hausa grows cotton well, and what the Hausa can do well we can do better. But come: Paddy has fallen asleep, and it is time we turned in ourselves. Good-night. Go to bed, and think it over to-morrow.'

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The British administration was at that time being pushed rapidly all over Hausaland, and it only just came in time to prevent a general lapse into anarchy. The Fulani rule had disappeared. True, in some large towns there were still Emirs, and even in the small ones the Alkalis still held their courts; but the power of Sokoto, though not yet broken, had no effective strength. It could only be used in a bluffing way. The local oppressor invoked it in support of his tyranny, but the oppressed could not appeal to it for aid. As a result of this the time of a British Resident was mainly taken up in listening to complaints from natives whose relatives had been killed or who had been robbed.

There were two kinds of robbery—robbery by violence and robbery by bluff. The first kind included highway robbery, brigandage, the raiding of villages, the holding up or wiping out of a caravan. The other kind included all kinds of stealth but stealing; all wrong possession or dispossession under cover of authority or by the uncontrolled machinery of the law, such as the levying of unauthorized and unaccustomed tolls on caravans, impersonation (the very common offence of pretending to be an agent of Sokoto or of the White Man), the compelling of men to work for those to whom they owed no service, the taking of young women as wives without their fathers' consent, the shifting of landmarks, and the urging of unjust claims to farms—claims based either on naked power or on the foundation of a bribe to the local court.

It had very soon become evident to the new Assistant-Resident in the course of his duties that there was a wide gulf between these two kinds of robbery. While, on the one hand, headquarters would always provide troops and armed police, if they were available, for the suppression of the first kind, for the capture of a raider, for the storming of a robber stockade established on a trade route, or to avenge the murder of a mail-runner; while armed violence

was willingly suppressed, the other kind, quite as obnoxious in the mind of an Englishman, was apparently ignored. Complaints constantly came in from all sides, and yet all the young man could get in answer to his reports was: 'Make a note of it and wait.' As story after story of wrong, of oppression, of injustice, was unfolded to him, his soul cried out within him against the restraint, and night after night, pacing the hard ground in front of his hut before turning in, he would, in recalling the work of the day, long to leave his cramped and monotonous quarters, to jump on his little horse, to burst upon the village where the oppressor was in command, and to bring to its people the justice of the White Man. This he would feel much as a shepherd's dog may be supposed to feel a desire to be off and away as he pricks up his ears in the night when the wolf howls over the hill.

* * * * *

One case in which he took more than usual interest was that of Paddy's brother. That case began, so far as he was concerned, one morning when he was sitting in the shade of the low, projecting thatch of his hut, enjoying the short period of rest he allowed himself between breakfast and the office table. The first he saw of it was the faithful Paddy walking at express speed from the entrance to the compound, spluttering with excitement, quivering with rage, and boiling over with indignation. With his face working and his eyes gleaming, he came to attention in the sunlight, and, saluting with more than usual stiffness and formality, blurted out the words:

'I beg you, sah.'

'Well, Paddy, what is it this morning?'

Then Paddy poured out a torrent of words, in the course of which the young white man gathered that a grievous wrong had just been done in a neighbouring town, that a young and virtuous chief had been suddenly and violently dispossessed of his heritage, turned out of

his ancestral home neck and crop, and that his extensive farms had been laid waste and desolated under the very nose of the White Man.

His first impulse was to disbelieve it; it seemed impossible for such a thing to have happened without his having heard of it. Paddy observed this, and with a wave of his hand towards the gate signalled for the advance of the complainant, who had been waiting for the summons. The man was dressed in a tope, which was clean, though discoloured by time, and heavily ornamented, though frayed with wear, and he wore a pair of decent leather slippers. Shabby he was, but clean; poor, too, but proud. He stood before the white man respectful but perfectly self-possessed. He was no slave, he was no common labourer; there was a dignity in his bearing which was unmistakable. His face was calm, and if he shared the excitement of his introducer, he did not show it. The white man looked him over and liked him—thought he could believe what he said. But when Paddy announced that this quiet-faced man was his brother born ('Mee own brudder, sah,' was the way he put it), he decided at once that it was all humbug. The absurdity of Paddy's face and this one being even of the same part of the country seemed so obvious that, seeing the Resident walk over to the office, he took the opportunity of putting an abrupt end to the palaver, and went in to his work.

Poor Paddy was much upset, and showed it. He seemed to be honestly and seriously disappointed with his master altogether. For the next three days he kept bubbling over with his trouble. Morning and night, when dressing his master, he mentioned it, until at last it dawned that it was no silly lie, this about the relationship between these two men who were of such different types. They were really brothers, but only half-brothers —'All-ee same farder,' as Paddy put it. The servant was the offspring of a pagan woman in the household of a

petty Hausa king; the other was the legitimate heir. When this was once understood, the whole story was easily extracted—the extent of the farms, the size of the town, the tribute paid to Sokoto, the manner of the dispossession—a veritable *coup d'état* on a small scale. He put down everything, even to the name of the aggressor and those who had helped him, and then mentioned it to the Resident at dinner.

He got a few hints which helped him to fill up the gaps in the story. In the first place, it had happened several years ago, and the suddenness and earnestness of the complaint, not by any means simulated, was merely caused by the stirring up of all the old grievance in the mind in which it had lain dormant for so long, to be awakened in all its old heat on the arrival of the brother—who had, of course, been specially sent for a month back, when Paddy got a Mallam to write him the letter—revived with new vigour on the prospect of its being dealt with. It was a gross case of usurpation. A slave-born adviser of a petty King had grabbed the government on the death of his master, the rightful heir being then barely more than a lad. There had been an appeal to Sokoto, but Sokoto was powerless to do anything. It was said that Sokoto had indeed commanded Kano to see justice done, but that Kano had been propitiated by a bribe collected by force from the unwilling people.

It was quite impossible for the white man to do anything. The town was on the border of the newly-formed province of Zaria, and it was impossible to send a force up, even if there had been any object in doing so. 'Besides,' said the Resident, 'what would be the use of us going up there to reinstate a youth who is, perhaps, quite unfit to govern in troublous times like these? Better let it wait. If we worried ourselves now about every petty King who is not strong enough or lucky enough to hold his own, we should never do anything at all. We should

be swamped in detail; we have no machinery for it; we should spend millions, and be worn out long before any of us had anything to show for a life-work. It's the case of your human sacrifice all over again. It's not a bit of use attacking these evils one by one; we must attack the system, or want of system, under which they are possible, under which they flourish, and they will right themselves. And, in attacking the system, we must strike at the root. When you have to fell a tree, it's no use lopping, it's no use cutting off a bit here and a bit there—that will come later on; the first thing to do is to strike at the root. That is what we are doing. And, believe me, this particular tree will take us all our time. If we lop, the thing will go on growing. If these evils are ever to be stopped, we must get at the cause of them, and that is the present Government of Sokoto, which is a sham altogether, and worse than none at all.'

So Paddy's brother had to wait. Morning after morning he came to the Assistant-Resident's hut to salute him as, wrapped in a blanket, he drank his morning cup of cocoa. He did no work, but was always well dressed, always well groomed, and was always treated with respect by the boys about the place; perhaps Paddy saw to that. Next to his devotion to his master came his devotion to this brother of his. It may have been a real brotherly affection. The two had grown up together; Paddy had been a lad when the other could only run about, had perhaps tended him as he grew, certainly had an affection for him. But the devotion was no doubt—perhaps unconsciously—intensified by the knowledge that when his brother regained his rightful position, he, Paddy, would be a great man in the town of his birth and among his own people. Perhaps Paddy's devotion to the White Man was mainly his devotion to the power which was to bring this most desired position about. So Paddy's brother waited, and sat at the White Man's gate, as hundreds were at that

time doing all over the country — sitting actually or metaphorically at the gate, waiting for the establishment of the power of the White Man and the justice which they believed would follow.

When the Assistant-Resident was moved to Lokoja for the last two months of his tour, Paddy's brother went with him; and, not liking to have the man sitting about the place doing nothing, he suggested to Paddy that, though the King-that-was-to-be could not work, he might join the West African Frontier Force to keep him out of mischief and to learn to fight. At first Paddy demurred, but when it was put to him that his brother would in this way learn some of the 'ju-ju' of the White Man, there was much quiet palavering away in the servants' quarters, and finally one day Paddy brought his brother, in all the glory of red zouave jacket and tasselled fez, to display himself and salute his protector.

His master wanted Paddy to go to England with him, to open his mind; but he vigorously shook his head, and said:

'No, sah, I no tink.'

'Why not?'

'I fear, sah. I fear de cold go catch me, sah,' said Paddy without hesitation, though the real reason was something very different. He must stay and watch his brother, the King-who-was-to-be. He would not even go down to Burutu, and, after watching the steamer down out of sight, he turned back and swung himself off to the camp to hear the news.

An escort was going up to Bautshi with some mineral prospectors, and then part of it was to go across to Zaria. Paddy only knew that his brother was one of a hundred men going up the Benue in a few days *on palaver*, and that he meant to go, too, and must be quick about it.

The day before the expedition started, the Lieutenant

in charge of it was cursing his luck because his cook-boy was sick and refused to leave Lokoja.

'I believe the young devil is shamming, and I've a good mind to make him go,' he said to a friend after leaving the mess.

'No good that,' was the reply. 'If he's shamming, he's funking; and if he's funking, he'll run away. Get another.'

'How can I get another? Will you lend me yours?'

'Lend you mine? Why, old chap, where should I be when my turn came?'

Just at that moment two figures moved quietly into the little circle of lamplight. One of them, the Lieutenant's cook-boy, stooping, shivering, and sweating, either very ill or shamming very well, said he had found a boy for his master, a 'pass-fine' boy. 'Talk of the devil . . .' said the Lieutenant; and Paddy was engaged at thirty shillings a month.

There was no fighting on the way to Bautshi, and Paddy watched his brother with satisfaction. One morning, when he got back from a foraging trip to a village near, he could not find him, and quickly learnt that he and twenty other picked men had, without warning, been marched out early as if to go up north. Paddy could not get news there so surely as he could at Lokoja, and stayed and hoped it was only a short trip, and that his brother would be back in camp in a few days. But the time passed, and, with a heavy heart, Paddy at last accompanied his new master back to Lokoja. Arrived there, he incontinently sought out the cook-boy he had displaced, and brought him to the veranda for re-engagement. The Lieutenant protested and stormed, and tried to cajole, but it was no use, and Paddy disappeared.

He was next heard of at Zaria, where he surprised the Resident one evening by turning up very dusty, but with his excellent testimonials, honest face, and knowledge of

English, at a time when servants were scarce, if obtainable at all. He offered his services as a cook, houseboy, horse-boy, messenger, or interpreter, and secured the last post.

He very soon sought out some of the garrison who had been in the little party which had left Bautshi so mysteriously. He asked them what had become of his brother, and they told him all about it. The party, after a day's march direct north, had suddenly turned back and gone westward. The third day it had swooped unexpectedly upon a village full of truculent thieves, and had inflicted swift and effective vengeance for a murdered mail-carrier, whose skull still grinned over the gateway. In the attack Paddy's brother had been missed. He had been seen to fall when the soldiers had rushed forward on the first volley from the villagers, a volley from nothing worse than trade guns, but delivered at such close quarters from the shelter of the bush that another of the party had been hit in the arm and been discharged. When they had burned the village so that there was nothing left, they went back to look for Paddy's brother, and shouted for him all round and about; but he was not to be found. Perhaps he had only been wounded; he had been seen to struggle to his feet and fall down a second time, but none of them could tell in the general excitement exactly where it had happened, and it was soon dark. One man said he had perhaps deserted, and Paddy brightened up. But the overwhelming weight of opinion was that this was absurd, and that he had been killed, perhaps burnt up in the grass as he lay, for the fire spread.

From that day Paddy was a changed man. He did his work as well as ever, with even more precision than ever, so that he earned his master's frequent blessing. But the light had gone out of his life, and he seemed no longer to take interest in it. He would sit and mope in a corner, and instead of being, as before, the life of

the groups in the servants' quarters, he sat no more among them.

He seemed to be without any definite object in life, and to know it. But one day he heard that the White Man was going to Kano. There had been great activity in the depot at Zungeru for some time, and everyone had got accustomed to it without inquiring for any cause. The short line of railway was being used as much as it possibly could be used, carrying stores from the Kaduna to the depot, and every day carriers were filing into Zaria with their loads. The garrison was increasing daily, and white men were coming up with every mail, while none were going away. Paddy had never seen so many white men together before—no, not even in Lokoja. At first he was not more than vaguely interested in the proceedings, regarding them as usual and ordinary preparations for the possible attack from Kano, who was always reported to be going to drive the White Man away. But one day he was told that all the fuss was not for defence at all, but that the White Man was really going to Kano. At first he doubted, for there were not a thousand soldiers in the place altogether, and there was no news of more on the way. What could a thousand soldiers hope to do against Kano? Had not Kano been rebuilding and strengthening his walls for years? Everyone knew that. Every caravan brought fresh descriptions of their height, their width, and of the great ditch.

Kano had flooded the country all round north of Zaria with his 'gunmen'—hordes of irresponsible fighters with firearms carried by the Arabs across the desert, not mere trade guns. These 'gunmen' raided indiscriminately, seizing what they could, and carrying terror far and wide. There were hundreds and hundreds of them, and if these were the skirmishers, the freebooters, the feelers, what must the army of Kano be in its strength? Paddy and others doubted, but his doubts were laughed at by those

who had information, boys whose masters were making them pack up for the march, and he realized that the White Man was at last going to try conclusions with his mortal enemy, the bribe-taker. He became jumpy and excitable again at once. He astonished his master by begging to be allowed to join the Mounted Infantry, so that he might go and fight himself. The quiet-faced Resident smiled, and told him that he would be seeing all the fun without enlisting more than he had done, and he must be ready to start early on the very next day. Paddy looked incredulous; the news had only just got about, and there must be much to do yet. But the Resident pointed to his boys, and when he saw the cook packing pans into a soap-box, he understood that it was all going to happen quickly, and rushed off to make his own arrangements.

Early next morning the expedition left *Z*aria. Such an expedition had never marched in Hausaland before. There were not altogether more than seven hundred and fifty fighting natives, but there were over forty white men, and they had no less than eight guns. The force soon found war waiting for it. On approaching a little town called Bebeji, there was an ominous quiet all round. There were no people working in the fields, not a soul in sight. The gates were closed, and it could be seen that the walls were lined with fighting men. The column halted, and two of the guns were got ready. The British non-commissioned officers hurried about ordering the men into formation as they came up.

The Resident, riding alongside the Commandant, looked round and beckoned Paddy, who was as proud as a prince on one of the many spare horses of the Mounted Infantry.

'I think they make palaver,' said the master.

'So I tink, sah,' said Paddy.

'I go tell them not to be fools. You fit to come with me?' was the question.

'I fit, sah,' said Paddy, with one of his stiffest salutes.

The pair trotted out alone in the sun, a brown speck and a blue one, the white man in his khaki and the interpreter with his Bida tope billowing out on both sides as he rode. Right away up to within earshot of the walls they went, while the Hausa soldiers, standing at the guns or sitting in their rows, grunted approval and raised their chins to watch, while the carriers, putting down their loads, stopped to chatter to one another about it.

Right away up to the walls rode the Resident, and then called out for the King. He was told, after an anxious few minutes' delay, that the King had gone away and left the town, with strict orders to everyone not to admit the White Man and not to let him pass. Paddy passed this on with the comment, 'I no tink, sah,' and the Resident told him to ask how far the King had gone. The man shouting on the wall disappeared again for a minute, and then came and said the King had gone to Kano. Then Paddy was told to tell them not to be fools, and that the White Man did not want to do them any harm, and he did his best. The Resident knew Hausa himself, and called out a few words here and there; but the men on the walls would only repeat that their King was away, and they dare not disobey his orders.

The pair trotted back, the Resident to speak to the Commandant, and Paddy to stand ten yards away, stiff and trembling with excitement now it was all over. The Commandant signed to a Lieutenant, who got off his horse, threw the rein to his horse-boy, and joined the non-commissioned officer at one of the guns. This presently belched its little spit of flame, bounced in the sand, and, while the curling smoke broke into shreds against the bushes behind it, a brown cloud of dust sprang up on the wall near to the gate. The next shot scattered the gate itself, and made a breach through which the huts could be seen, and the black forms melting among them.

Then a few shells fell inside the town, and the smoke rose white and thick where one corner was set on fire. By this time the inhabitants were running out of the far gates and away across the fields, seeing which the Commandant sent a storming party in. This met with no resistance worthy of the name, and in very little time the Resident was riding with Paddy at his heels through the ruined gate.

As they managed their horses, picking their way carefully through the stones and débris, Paddy suddenly gave a great shout. The Resident pulled his horse up sharp and jerked it round, to find the man pointing at a little heap of bodies. Paddy, bubbling with excitement, explained that one of the corpses was that of the King himself, and then, standing in his stirrups, waved his arm aloft and chattered to the skies in his own tongue. It is not every liar who meets with such a dramatic retribution. The King, who had himself dictated the false statements about his absence, had been killed by the shell which wrecked the gate, behind which he was waiting to sally out with his principal warriors at the right moment.

The story was told round every camp fire that night. It inspired in the minds of the soldiers a confidence in the 'ju-ju' of the White Man beyond the power of any victory, and, spreading all over the countryside like wild-fire, it had the excellent effect of opening the gates of every other town on the way to Kano—towns which had been commanded, as Bebeji had, to fight to the death, and had prepared to do so. Town after town was approached, spoken to, and entered in peace; the women came out with chickens and fruit, and the Resident noted with satisfaction the crowds of curious sight-seers on ramparts which had been newly built and bore every evidence of serious warlike preparation.

When Kano was reached the task of the little force appeared utterly hopeless. The white men themselves

were astonished at the solid mass of the walls against which the guns peppered without effect. Walls standing 30 to 50 feet high, 30 feet wide at the base, steep and inscalable, with small gates worked through them zigzag, so that the place seemed indeed impregnable. Of the fight Paddy saw but little. There was a great noise and rattle, there was much smoke, and it was not all carried on in one place. Then the news was shouted back from one to another that the White Man had gone inside through the next gate, with plenty-plenty men, and presently the firing ceased.

During the rest of the day there was a little firing here and there in the area within the walls, but none of importance. The people left their employment rather to look at the newcomers than for fear of them. The main trouble was with a gang of prisoners, who, they said, had been let out of the gaol to fight when the White Man approached.

That night Paddy sat chattering in all his old form round a fire within the enclosure of the King's palace. Many stories of the wonderful power of the White Man were passed along, losing nothing by the way. Paddy's story of the King of Bebeji, killed at his gate with the lie on his lips, was utterly eclipsed by the general 'ju-ju' which had, according to the natives of Kano, brought the White Man to the town at the very moment when the King was away at Sokoto with all his best fighting men and all his advisers, paying homage to the new Sultan.

Next morning Paddy was sent for, and found the Resident ready with some more to visit the prison, in which it was rumoured there were still several prisoners left. When the party reached it, they found it was an evil place enough, with neither window nor ventilation of any sort. It was entered by a simple hole in the wall through which it was necessary to creep in on hands and

knees. The prisoners certainly had been let out either to watch the fighting or take part in it—the unguarded hole was sufficient evidence of that, even if they had not caused so much trouble overnight looting and attacking harmless townsmen until some of them were shot down.

According to the reports there were some 150 of them. The first thing the white men said when they saw the building was that it was absurd to think so many had come out of such a small place, but Paddy passed on the positive assurance that as many as two hundred had been forced to creep through this very hole some nights. One officer said there wasn't standing room for half so many, and Paddy said they often had to crawl along when they got inside over those who had gone in first, and so spend the night, trampling and being trampled on.

The first white man who crept into the hole came out almost at once and was violently sick. Some natives went in with a light and reported that there were several bodies and that some of them moved, and that one was one of the White Man's own soldiers. Hearing this, the Resident went in holding his handkerchief to his face, and was closely followed by Paddy. Once inside, he stood up and found himself in a longish narrow chamber, 11 feet high, 7 feet wide, and 17 feet long. Looking round, he wondered whether there could be any truth at all in the reported numbers. Along the base of the opposite wall there was a row of holes, and there were two or three human beings lying on the floor with their legs thrust through them. From two of the holes a pair of feet protruded, tied to a block of wood, and this drew the Resident's attention to another hole big enough to creep through.

Passing through this after the man with the light, they found themselves in another chamber similar to the last, but, if possible, heavy with a more abominable stench.

The man to whom the feet belonged was dead, so the Resident rose from his knee and turned to two men chained together, one of whom wore the khaki knickers and blue shirt of the West African Frontier Force, tattered and torn and filthy, but unmistakable. He saw at a glance that the other was dead, and touched the soldier gently with his foot. The man looked up, blinked at the light, and grinned. The Resident put out his hand for Paddy, but before he could touch him he dashed himself on the ground at his feet with a howl, and began tearing at the chains which coupled the dead and the living together. Then, finding these too strong for him, he gripped the soldier by both shoulders, stared in his vacant face, and chattered so quickly that the Resident, in spite of his knowledge of Hausa, could not catch a word. The man did not seem to understand, and only grinned again and blinked at the light. Then, snatching him up in his arms, Paddy dragged him first through one hole and then through the other, until he was in broad daylight again.

The Resident followed, and, staggering into the arms of the nearest man, asked for a drink. Paddy sat on the ground with his burden, and the men round asked what it all meant. Then Paddy snatched and tore at the chains until he was gently pushed away by others with more skilful hands, who first parted them and then drew the battered corpse aside. When this was done Paddy sat down again and talked furiously to the soldier once more, but he would not or could not understand, and only covered his eyes from the glare of the sun whenever one of his hands was free for a moment, and grinned. The Resident, having swilled his mouth out with spirits and spat viciously at the wall of the prison, walked across, and, putting his hand on Paddy's head, stooped and asked quietly what it all meant and who the man was. Paddy looked up with a face which was twitching with pleasure

but worried because there was so much he could not understand, and said, 'Mee own brudder, sah.'

That was how Paddy found his brother—worn and wasted to a skeleton, grinning and diddering, chained to a corpse. Wounded in the attack on the village away near Bautshi, he had crawled into the bush, and not waked until the moon was high. As soon as his leg was better, he had wandered about looking for the force, until he had been captured and taken as a great prize to Kano, there to be thrown into the prison. Paddy resigned his position as interpreter to the Resident and took charge of him. In a few months' time he recovered his reason, and was told to go and sit down at Zaria to wait until the court had time to look into his case and reinstate him in his own town, where, if he is not a good Governor and a faithful adherent of the British Government, he ought to be.

CHAPTER XI

COTTON

A revival of an old market—American mills—A declining industry—The British Cotton-Growing Association—Supply and demand on the Coast—Ground-nuts—Yorubas as agriculturists—Signs of ancient cultivation—Tropical grass—Fire after fire—A fertile soil—The cotton fields of the future.

FORTY years ago cotton was one of the principal exports of Lagos, on the West Coast of Africa. The figures were £76,957 in 1869, but in 1901 they had dropped to £154 6s. 8d. Where did the cotton come from in 1869? Why did the supply stop? Is the source of supply still as it was? These questions suggest themselves at once. The answers are simple. The cotton came from the hinterland, from the interior, from Yorubaland. The natives gathered it then, as they gather it to-day; and they parted with it to the White Man because he was for a time offering a higher price than the Hausa weavers who wanted it, who were accustomed to take it, and who want it and take it to-day. The Hausas were and are the Yorubas' best customers for cotton. They bought all the Yorubas gathered, and the Yorubas gathered only what they could sell. The supply to Liverpool stopped because the cost of Yankee cotton went down, and the white traders could no longer offer a tempting price. The source of supply is still as it was, and with anything like proper management the supply will continue; there is

practically no limit to the possibility of production; the only consideration is the demand.

The Arab in the Soudan wore his flowing robes of Hausa cotton before the Coast negro was shipped across to the States to work the plantations there. Cotton was not, like the tobacco-plant and the potato, discovered in the New World. The demand was shifted from the West Coast to the States because, with proper attention and intelligent cultivation, the cotton produced there was better in quality and cheaper in price, and the demand will be shifted back again on account of the price first, and will then remain permanently on the Coast, because so soon as the cultivation gets anything like decent attention the quality will hold its own, and more. It is the high price which has compelled our buyers to turn to the Coast and to the encouragement of the improvement of native cotton, an encouragement which should have been extended to the Coast before, and would at any time have been profitable if seriously undertaken. This change back to the West Coast of Africa, back to the natural home of cotton, was inevitable; but it has been put off and put off from time to time even by those who saw most clearly that it must come, and to-day it is not coming as a result of commercial foresight so much as because the merchants have been driven into a corner. They have been driven to act against their will, and their necessity may actually prove to be their salvation.

Slowly but surely the mills of the States have grown in number and in size, and have absorbed more and more of the cotton of the States. At one time nearly the whole output of those Southern cotton-fields came to Lancashire; now the greater part of it is wanted by the American manufacturers. This process of increased absorption has been going on for years; those most immediately interested have seen it with apprehension, but nothing has been done. In time, perhaps, action would have been taken

to find new cotton-fields; but it is quite as probable that nothing would have been done at all, that no effective efforts would have been made, and that, as a result, the great cotton industry of Lancashire would have slowly shrunk and slowly changed its nature.

That is the way with an industry when it starts going down-hill. The Board of Trade is busy compiling statistics of these things for merchants and traders to consider and profit by; it never takes the initiative. If the individuals who constitute the trade study the statistics at all, they generally do so mainly with the idea of using their knowledge for their own private gain, and, for want of combination, for want of mutual trust, nothing is done. Each individual is busily engaged in looking after himself in the general slump, scheming and plotting to postpone or survive each small crisis as it arises. The weakest drop out one by one, and their dropping out gives a measure of temporary relief to the situation. That is the way with the masters; the workers do much the same. They pass into other trades, not, of course, without much individual worry and loss; but they do it slowly, and try so hard to hide their distress from their fellows, sacrifice so much to enable them to hold their heads up all the time, that the process is almost unnoticed.

That was the prospect a few years ago—a gradual loss of the cotton industry for Lancashire; but the danger has been averted; something happened which, by hastening and accentuating the evil, has driven the masters to united action, and enabled both masters and workers to see their danger and the way to meet it. The happening was a series of operations in cotton manipulated with all too much success by a gang of those speculators who prey upon agriculture, commerce, and industry much as hawks prey upon chickens. A slight failure of the crop gave them the opportunity, and they made a corner in cotton by which they realized a few transitory million dollars

between them, but by which masters and workers and tradesmen in Lancashire—yea, the whole civilized world —lost infinitely more. The disaster was so sudden and complete that the trade rose against the cause, and clamoured for a way of controlling the American speculator.

The gambler is always at work seeking ways of acquiring money without giving anything in return; but while crops are good, while the supply keeps ahead of the demand, while prices are steadily falling, he is not noticed. So long as the gradual fall in price which means profit and prosperity continues, the merchant never considers whether the fall ought not to be more rapid. No one ever stops to think whether the gambler is economically good or bad, and he escapes the attention he deserves. He is always doing harm to trade, always damaging industries, always interfering with commerce, always stultifying the efforts of the tillers of the soil; but, as a rule, the trader, the manufacturer, the merchant, the planter, hardly notice the toll he levies on their profits. It is only when the demand for a material runs up to or ahead of the supply that the evil, always existing, is noticed, and hostility is aroused against it.

With the cost of the material bounding up to unheard of prices, mill after mill went on short time or closed altogether, masters were ruined, and horrible stories ran through the papers of families, who had grown accustomed to earning good money and spending it as fast as it came in, having to go without the bare necessities of life, living on potato-peelings, or actually starving. A shout of execration went up against the Great Bull; and when at last he was broken, Lancashire joined with his natural enemies the Bears in exultation. Nor did it stop at shouting. Masters and men joined in a series of meetings and conferences, which resulted in the formation of the British Cotton-Growing Association. The immediate

object aimed at was to break the power of the American speculator. Many speculators in Liverpool no doubt heartily co-operated in that. The best way to break the American speculator was felt to be to break the practical monopoly in cotton now enjoyed by America, to widen the area of production, to multiply the sources of supply. Tremendous efforts are now being made to get cotton grown in the British Empire, efforts which have attracted plenty of helpers; the national feeling has helped a lot.

The association has really done wonders in the short time it has been in existence. It has grown into a huge organization, huge and wealthy, and its work has been mentioned in the King's Speech. It is paying special attention to the West Coast of Africa, the natural home of the cotton-plant. It is sending out the best seed obtainable. This, by the way, had already been done to a considerable extent by the Elder Dempster Line, but the association is doing it on a larger scale. It is sending experts out into the most promising districts to report as to the cotton already grown, the nature of the soil, the quantity and quality of labour obtainable, and the general system of cultivation which is likely to pay best. It is starting experimental farms now, and will probably watch and foster the whole industry in the future. If it does this, it will almost certainly establish cotton on the Coast for good.

This is where the real usefulness of the association will be apparent—in fostering and watching the industry when it is once in full swing, to prevent any relapse. Without its efforts, without anything more than the high price and the pressure of the demand, cotton will be produced from the Coast for some years—so long as the price lasts. So long as the White Man will give more than the Hausa, so long he will get the cotton—the cotton which is grown there, and will be grown there. So long as the price is kept up the natives will grow more and more cotton; but

so soon as the price falls they will lose heart, and perhaps let the cultivation lapse lower than it was before. That has been the way with commodities on the Coast for years.

That is the way with ground-nuts. The price goes up; the natives realize they can get more money for ground-nuts than for the other things they have been growing; they neglect the other things and grow ground-nuts. Vast areas are put under cultivation. For a time all is well; but the demand declines for some reason, of which the natives know nothing. They only know that the traders who would buy ground-nuts last year will not buy ground-nuts now, and the result is ruin and anger—anger against the White Man—and it will be hard to persuade them to grow ground-nuts, even if the demand comes back again. It has been the same with coffee. The natives know nothing of the reasons for the White Man's demand; if it drops off for a season they lose heart, and drop the cultivation altogether. Yet in England men can see the demand coming, and can foretell its decline—not absolutely, of course, but to a very large extent—the natives cannot see beyond the present season, beyond the present bargain. If they only had the information which exists, they would be saved much waste of labour and infinite disappointment. What they want is a Board of Trade. If the association will by some means nurse the industry, advise it, and keep it going through occasional slack seasons, it will do a real lasting good to the Coast and to its inhabitants. The natives have been too much accustomed to rush in this direction and that direction according to the somewhat fitful demands of the white traders.

The natives need a Board of Trade badly; they also need a Board of Agriculture. There will be ample scope for the association in extending the work of a botanical garden or horticultural department, in experiment and

research, in supplying the chiefs with seed, and helping them with suggestions. The natives will undertake the actual planting and gathering themselves in their own way, following their existing customs, and in accordance with their own native land laws. They understand their soil well. The White Man has little to teach them about agriculture. We are so accustomed to consider ourselves in all things superior to blacks, so accustomed to think we can go and teach them something about everything on earth, that it may be hard to realize this. Yet in 1901 an Industrial Mission from Canada, which went into the Provinces of Kabba and Illorin, right into the land of the Yorubas, the agriculturists of Northern Nigeria, came out again with the opinion that they had nothing to teach them about the soil. The Yorubas are great on yam-growing. They only use hoes, and with these they only scratch the surface; but they scratch it into little mounds —which are just what the yam wants—and they build a tiny roof or cover of sticks and thatch over each plant to preserve it from the heat of the sun. The land round Lokoja for a mile or two is full of such little mounds, showing how far the fields cultivated by the people of that place once extended. The Government cantonment, the post-office, the polo-ground, and all the White Man's bungalows, stand now where the King's domestic slaves used to till his fields from sunrise to just before noon every day; and the little mounds they made can be found in the grass-grown bush a few yards away from the present clearings.

These and other signs of ancient cultivation are met with everywhere in Nigeria, and enable us to estimate how great a population the soil has supported in days gone by, in the days when there was a powerful government and when the Fulani were strong enough to raid for slaves outside the territories they ruled instead of in them. Sometimes the sign is a rank and wild tangle

of bananas, and other things which indicates that there were once ample groves and fields, and leads to the discovery of traces of houses in the bush; sometimes it is an area of mounds; sometimes it is an area of ridges. At Zungeru, if a man walks beyond the cantonment, away up the slopes of the great shallow basin in which the town has been built, he will, while making his way slowly through the high grass, catch his foot and stumble, not once, but nearly all the time, upon ridges of small stones —clean stones in ridges a few inches high and a few feet apart, stretching along the face of the gradual rise. These indicate cultivation, just as the regular undulations in English pastures indicate that the land was once ploughed and sown. The ridges of stones are probably all that is left of higher ridges of soil, the rain having washed the earth back into the hollows; anyway, they are unmistakable evidence that the land which now only supports occasional deer and wild bush-cow when the young grass begins to shoot, used, many years ago, to support multitudes of human beings; and we know that they wore then the same flowing cotton gowns their descendants wear to-day.

Cultivation is general all over Hausaland; it is the feature of the Niger Valley, and Nature helps it perhaps more there than in any other part of the world. From the deck of the steamer travellers can look over the fringe of reeds, and, year in year out, see acres and acres of brown land tilled and bare, waiting for the next crop. Nor are the people satisfied with their permanent fields. So soon as the water subsides after the rains, the villagers come out to claim level patches of sandy mud in the vast river-bed, which they plant over and over again as the crops are cleared until the water rises once more.

The most frequent and most genuine excuse of chiefs for not being able to supply carriers is that they are engaged on their farms. The men can be seen all the year round

jabbing holes in the ground with a long stick, and dropping seed into them from bags strung round their necks. The steamer attracts little attention from these sowers; sometimes they take no notice of her at all, sometimes they stop for a few moments to watch her as she passes, but before she is out of sight they turn to their work again. Very little work is necessary, and the crops are rapid and plentiful; they are often not gathered at all. Maize, millet, guinea-grain, yams, sweet potatoes, onions, and all sorts of beans, grow in abundance. There is no lack of food up the Niger, and, except for an occasional debauch of sheep, and for scraps of smoked fish taken as a kind of side-dish, this food is mainly—practically entirely—won from the soil by agriculture which has not been learnt from the White Man—rough and ready agriculture it may appear to us, but it is sufficient, and perhaps it is the most suitable to the climate and to the soil.

If once the natives find they can get a market for cotton, they will grow it in abundance. It will not be possible for anyone who has travelled through Northern Nigeria to imagine such a thing as exhaustion of the resources of the soil, and there is little doubt the soil, the climate, and the labour obtainable are all just the ones required for cotton. The excessive fertility of the soil, the rapid growth of everything, is bewildering, and is always leading travellers into error. The first set of experts sent up into Yorubaland by the British Cotton-Growing Association sent home glowing accounts of the park-like prospect; they reported undulating plains, dotted with trees and covered with luxuriant pasture, on which cattle, sheep, and deer browsed freely, and they made urgent appeals for ploughs with which to break the surface of this new virgin prairie. That is how Northern Nigeria looks sometimes, but only for a few weeks: just as the young grass begins to grow, until it is about

18 inches high, the country in many parts does indeed look exactly like a typical English residential park. At this time the cattle and sheep do browse on it, and the deer come down from the rocks. But the growth of the grass is rapid beyond all understanding. In a few weeks it is breast-high, and before it is ready to be burnt it stands 12 feet and more. A plough might not help the natives much to win the land for cultivation; they can clear it in their own way if they want to. The grass is calculated to make a white man with experience of agriculture in the Temperate Zone despair; but the natives know how to deal with it, and it does not grow on their village fields—not so long as the village is there to be fed.

As the dry season advances the grass catches fire all over the country side, and the land is streaked with lines of flame, red and smouldering in some places, and licking up everything in its path with loud crackles in others. From the river at night the sight is superb. Hill after hill is girt with its festoons or ring of flame, creeping or leaping along, just as the wind happens to be light or strong, against it or with it. If the natives do not make ample clearings round their villages the inevitable conflagrations lick them up. When the fires have burned themselves out the whole country looks black and dismal; the gum-trees and redwood-trees stand gaunt and naked, with their trunks charred and all their lower branches burned away—little dots of bright green against the dull brown of the ashes. The general prospect is enough to send an innocent agricultural expert home hot with accounts of volcanic eruptions. Everything is black, and a man taking a walk outside cantonments comes back looking like a sweep. Then, as the grass shoots up again, which it does almost at once, a green tinge spreads over everything, and the prospect is again like that of a park. A month or so passes, and it is a jungle

again. Year by year this burning up of the vegetation has gone on.

The things which grow in the Temperate Zone can hardly be grown at all in Nigeria; the soil is too rich for them. Beetroot, when planted, springs up into a great bush in a few weeks, and there is no root to it. The Roman Catholic Fathers at Onitsha have been successful with cucumbers and salad stuff, by carefully weakening the soil with sand and gravel. These cucumbers are a treat for travellers, and perhaps explain the interest many passing officials take in the good Fathers' schools and workshops. The cucumbers are the shape of our vegetable marrows, and taste like them when boiled. Potatoes will flourish when planted, but the seed will not reproduce. It is a mystery, this fertility, a mystery which many an official has tried to learn something about. A man brings seed out with him, or sends for it, marks out a bit of his enclosure, sets his boys digging in it, roofs it in with a cover of palm-leaves or grass-thatch on a low framework of stakes, and for a short time is delighted with the results; but in a few months, if not before, the garden takes charge, so to speak, and becomes more trouble than it is worth. There is no such fertility anywhere in the world, and this is the country where cotton has been grown for centuries, where cotton was grown long before it was planted in the States.

Northern Nigeria is the cotton-field of the future, and it is under British influence. We have very little to do to bring it to perfection. The British Cotton-Growing Association has only to help the native growers to improve the cotton; it must experiment with seed until the best kind or mixture is found; must watch and encourage, not undertake, the industry; and, above all, must arrange, and if necessary maintain, a demand for the produce until it can command its own consumption at all times by its excellence and price. It will only be necessary to start

the natives at it, and to stand by to help them over a possible bad season or market or two. It will not be necessary to organize a huge industry with a central control. We do not want a British Cotton Trust. It will probably not be best to start large plantations on American lines; it will probably be best to leave the natives to cultivate such patches and districts as they think fit in their own way, and to continue the system of stationing experts in residence at some places, and keeping them continually travelling about in others; to organize transport and storage, and arrange for the ginning and packing of the cotton for export on the spot or at collecting-stations, or both. Especially important will be the ginning.

Many a white man has sent his boy into the bush to gather wild cotton to stuff a bag for a pillow or cushion, or has sent him into the local market, where for a few coppers enough can be bought from the women, who bring it in for sale, as they bring in long red peppers, beans ready boiled, and heaps of edible caterpillars, in their great wide calabashes. It is cheap with the seed still in the fluff, but that is lumpy for the cheek as a pillow, and in time the oil from the seed marks and spoils the bag; so white men prefer to get it picked; and if it is picked, the price is much higher. The gathering of it is a simple matter; the small children of the village can get as much as is wanted, and not think it labour at all. The picking is a tedious process, and when the women have gone through it they do not care to sell the cotton; they prefer to spin it into thread for the Hausa traders and the weavers, who give them a really good price for it. It will, for this reason, be hard to secure a good supply if the traders insist on having it picked; if they will buy it with the seed in it and gin it themselves, they can have abundance. This is fully understood by the British Cotton-Growing Association, and gins are being sent out. The

women will bring in the cotton and seed together just as the children pluck it from the pods; they will be well pleased with what they are paid for it; it will be the easiest way of earning money they have known. Then the Yankee may keep all his cotton, and gamble and fool with his crop to his heart's content, to the injury of his own industries instead of the industry of Lancashire; in time he may even come and buy Coast cotton himself.

CHAPTER XII

MAMODU AND HIS 'JU-JU'

The Hausa-Fulani—His abilities—His testimonials—He is particular about his name—His wife and his compound—On duty at the telegraph-office—The native dancing—The national 'play'—Mamodu's 'ju-jus'—The Chief Justice is robbed—Mamodu finds a new master—The thief is captured, but Mamodu is disappointed—Mamodu's stall in the market—What he learned from the Mallams—The fire at Lokoja—His experiences 'on palaver'—The British square at 'Raha'—The picturesque ravine and the 'ju-ju' of the animals—Many other 'ju-jus'—A river picnic—The canoe and the polers—Legends of Othman Fodio—The influence of the Mallams—The prophecy and its fulfilment—Legends about the lost standard.

MAMODU was the smartest boy at Jebba. He had served many masters, and that was their universal opinion. Each of them, in turn, found him clean, quiet, honest, sober, clever at marketing, and, above all, respectful. In fact, he was better than any Coast boy could be, for, his mother having been a Hausa woman and his father a Fulani, he was never at a loss for a word. True, he had a great contempt for the Ejau nigger, and the much-tattooed Asaba boys had to learn one of his languages before he would talk with them; but, as his masters were only too pleased to say, he knew Hausa and Fulani perfectly, so he could make himself understood anywhere in the country. He had a special ability for keeping order among the other servants; he could beat up carriers when

the local chief came in person to explain that all the men were away at their farms or fishing; he could beckon men from the crowd to carry his master's kit when all the other arrivals had to send urgent notes to the officer in command of the station asking for a fatigue party; he could, at twenty-four hours' notice, find a new washerman, or cook, or punkah-boy, or plate-cleaner, or messenger, or interpreter, or a tiny lad who would learn to help with the bath and bedroom work, and they would be fairly satisfactory; he could even find a runner to take an urgent despatch a hundred miles or so; and his word was law on all matters of pay.

The testimonials his masters gave him were valuable ones. There was a demand for them beyond all others, for no boy had yet failed to secure a trial on presenting himself with one of Mamodu's 'books.'* The lucky purchaser of one of them would stand at attention in the doorway, and the new man who wanted a servant badly would look dubiously at him, and then read the testimonial again. It would be a contest between instinct or ability at the judging of character from the face, and that slip of paper, signed by some well-known senior official, then home on leave, whose name was a by-word for truth, seriousness of purpose, and knowledge of the natives; but the paper invariably carried the day, for servants were scarce in those days. Then, if the boy did his best he might pass, and the new man would merely think that the officer who recommended him was easily pleased. If the boy did not rise to the opportunity, well—he would disappear, and with him the perverted reference, to add one more to the mysteries of the Dark Continent. There was no tracing him, and as for the reference, there were so many Mamodus about, that, even if it was suspected to be a bought one, it was impossible to find who sold it.

* A 'book' is a writing, in this case a reference as to a boy's character.

Mamodu was very particular about his name. He liked all the accent to be put on the first syllable. He did not like even his master to call him 'Mōdu' or 'Mamōdu,' with the accent on the 'o.' If at first he fell into one of those very usual errors, Mamodu took opportunities of correcting the other servants for the mispronunciation or omission, whichever the case might be, not in any particularly marked way, but so that there was no mistake his master could hear. If this was not sufficient, he would hail a small-boy up, when the many house palavers were being attended to, and would ask permission to beat him for disrespect in calling him by a common low name, when he was entitled to three syllables, and the first one in particular. His master would look up from the shaving mirror, and tell him it would be better not to hurt the lad —at least, not that time—as he would no doubt soon get into the way of it. Then the gist of the little episode would come upon him like a flash during breakfast, and he would chuckle to himself, and make a mental note to say 'Mōdu' next time the young beggar annoyed him.

'Mōdu' is a very common name; most of the boys rejoice in corruptions or endearments of the name of the great Prophet. Of these, 'Mōdu' is the most frequent, the others being 'Mamodu,' 'Mohamodu,' or 'Mamo'.' These are sometimes disguised by the addition of the name of the place of origin; and when a boy announces that he is called 'Mōdu-Ogbomosho' or 'Mamodu-Badgibo,' he generally gets rechristened 'Tom' on the spot.

Mamodu, after having served many masters, had married a wife from Bida way, a strapping woman, a few inches taller than himself, who wore a brilliant red ornament through her left nostril, whose skin was always respectably oily, whose toenails were never without their *récherché* vermilion die, whose teeth were as white as snow, and whose brows and eyelids were at all times shining black

with the most orthodox antimony paste. Her hair was always done up in the same unobtrusive ridge, running 4 inches high from the nape of her neck to well over her forehead. She carried her first-born behind her, straddling on her hips, wrapped tightly to her back in the last of her many gaudy covers, out of the way of her arms as she walked. She was a hard-working woman, though she never seemed to do anything herself. Young and strong, life sat lightly on her shoulders. She kept the family compound neat and tidy, the very model of what a compound should be. There was never any palaver in it, though there was always plenty of company. Young girls, yet undeveloped, ground corn or sorted peppers; old women squatted over cook-pots, and if there was the slightest bickering, it was quelled with a look or a sharp 'Heh!' She did not go into the market, except to show herself; she had no need to do so, for few traders passed through Jebba without looking in at the compound, and she would sit and talk to them until her good man came home from his work.

Mamodu had been offered and had accepted an appointment under the Government, and he had for the time being shaken the dust of menial service from the soles of his feet. He was a telegraph-messenger at a shilling a day, and found the post congenial to him. The hours were especially convenient. He did not go on duty until seven in the morning, and his time was his own after six every evening in the week, to say nothing of Saturdays, when he was dismissed at two, and Sundays, when he only had to attend for a few hours every third week. The work also was exactly to his taste. Just as, while in service, he had sunned himself on the veranda all day, or made a few calls, while the small-boys spread out the blankets, washed the plates, swept the room, and got ready for mess, so now he lay outside the telegraph office-door on the warm boards, while the other messengers ran

about. The same ability which made him lord of the other servants and ruler of the household of all his masters had speedily secured for him promotion to the coveted post of head-messenger. He would lie on his back and gaze into the sky, with his morning tooth-brush waggling in his lips—his teeth were white, but kola-nut would soon have spoilt them if he had not kept them so by chewing the short stick of fibrous wood for an hour or so every day —or he would prop his back up against the wall, clasp his knees, and watch the canoes drifting far beneath him on the placid Niger; and he would meditate on the power of the White Man, and consider his ways. He could not understand the 'click-tick-tick' on the table through the match-boarding behind him; but he found the postmaster a promising substitute when one of the apprentices fell sick, and, what with his appointment and the many traders who gave him a call, he was one of the best-informed men in the town.

Mamodu was not tall, but he was magnificently built; life was no more a burden to him than it was to his wife. He knew nothing about Sandow, and would have considered the new combined developer a foolish kind of waistbelt; but he would have been in the running for a medal, nevertheless. He would sit on his heels and watch his first master—an old Cambridge blue—swing his Indian clubs on the veranda in his pyjamas; and he would jerk his chin up and give a little grunt every time the extra twist under the armpit made the club, which looked as if it were going behind, come curling up in front, but he would wonder what it all meant, while his master would watch him out of the corner of his eye and envy him his muscles.

'I call it positively sickening!' he said one evening after mess. 'Here I play polo, ride hard every night, and take twice as much exercise as ever I did at home, and I positively waste away, except where I am getting as fat

as a company promoter; and there's my little devil Mamodu there, who never does anything except squat about in the sun, a regular young Heracles. I never saw such a back in my life.' Then he called Mamodu from underneath among the piles and made him show his back. The fellows agreed that it was a beastly country, and said it must be the climate. Mamodu put his jacket on again slowly, and, wondering what was the matter with his back, felt it all over carefully, but found it all right. He could not at that time follow white men when they talked quickly. Now, it was quite a mistake to think he did nothing but squat about, for he was a great man in the dancing circle, and he had not at that time met his match at the national 'play.' Many and many a morning he would turn up to wake and dress his master with a swollen instep, and, while they all gave him a holiday to rest it, few of them understood what he really meant when he said in explanation of the injury: 'I go play, sah.'

White men who have eyes but see not are too apt to put the Hausa down as a lazy lubber; but he is nothing of the sort. He is not afraid of work, whether it be poling a canoe fourteen hours at a stretch, carrying a load thirty miles a day, chopping firewood, or building a house; and he has his games, and they are quite as sporting as our own. Young men in England are apt to think that boxing is the acme of scientific self-defence, and others to put football down as brutal; but, just as the Japanese have a science of self-defence which is immeasurably superior to the Queensberry Rules for practical utility, so the Hausas have a national 'play' to which boxing and Rugby football are mere pretences. In this 'play' there are no rules, except that the man who receives a blow acknowledges his defeat by abasing himself and scratching the back of his head with both hands, if he can—he is sometimes insensible.

The White Man is too apt to turn over in his bed, and curse the screaming, the shouting, and everlasting tom-tom in the village a quarter of a mile away. He never takes the trouble to find what it is about, and commits the unpardonable error of agitating for cantonment regulations to prevent it. He forgets all about the dangers of interference with customs and habits he does not indulge in himself, and he can't understand why the villagers are surly and impudent when it has been stopped. If he went to see, he would find a semicircle of youths, women, and children, squatting in the light of a big fire. In the middle, among the spectators, opposite the flames, sit some half-dozen experts on the tom-tom, and they are very expert indeed. If a white man bangs a tom-tom the noise produced is silly in the extreme, but when the native takes it up there is an impulse to sway one's head from side to side. The noise is deafening and incessant. It goes on for hours, swelling and dying down, but never stopping. If they ever rest, they never do it together.

In the open space dancers move irregularly about. There is no concerted movement. Each dancer acts on his own, and is immensely pleased with his own performance. A youth will sway his head to the tom-toms, and then get up and walk into the light and slowly walk round, with a slight swaying motion of his elbows and shoulders. It will take him quite a long time to get wound up to anything more; then his feet, always keeping time with the tomtoms, will gradually go faster and faster, until you can only see a blur of ankles. His eyes will no longer rest upon the spectators as he swings past; he is in a world to himself. His head, which has never ceased to move from side to side, seems double, the arms seem multiplied, and when you think the creature will drop exhausted, he slows down and becomes a human being again, continuing his monotonous walk, varied by a few such frenzies, for hours. Sometimes the dancers will

clear off respectfully into one corner to make room for a gray-bearded old sinner, who will go through an equally inane, but evidently approved, performance, making a speciality of his shoulder-blades. Throwing off his tope, he will finish up by standing with his back to the tom-toms, motionless, except for his shoulders. These will move up and down, slowly at first, then faster, faster, faster, until you cannot follow them with your eyes, and they suddenly stop. The dancing is not all exactly in good taste; its motive is too often undesirable; but there is no mistake about its being healthy and vigorous exercise.

The 'play' is more so. The bearded men and women take no part in it. A stripling, yellow at the mouth with kola-nut, probably half-drunk with one or other of the native brews, will walk into the circle and proceed to defy the universe. He will leap high into the air, and clap his heels together before he drops, or bring one of them round in the air at the level of his head with a swish which makes the women say 'Ah!' The tomtoms will grow frantic, as another, sitting in the front row, will get up and drop his cover on to the eager, upturned face of his neighbour, and the play begins. There is a lot of preliminary skirmishing and swagger, and much leaping into the air, samples of what may be expected; but at last they run to one another and take up the correct position in earnest. They stoop forward and move round, their feet never losing grip on the ground, watching one another like wrestlers. Their hands are stretched out in front, towards, but not quite touching those of their opponents. Their arms are crossed at the wrist, their fingers are straight, and the palms of their open hands are turned outwards to right and left. This proves to be a capital position for fending off blows, whether from hand or foot. The blows are quick and swinging, but nearly all smartly guarded. If one gets home—a thundering

whack on the side of the face with the back of the hand, or the wrist, brought straight round—the youth who gets it backs away, stoops down and scratches his head for half a minute, while the tomtoms fairly roar, and the smiter executes an extra *pas seul*. As the play proceeds there are fewer blows, there are many feints, and it is evident that the blows will be more serious. The feet are constantly on the move, and first one muscle and then another will tighten and hump up under the skin. A leap, a feint with a foot, a feint with a shoulder and a duck, but always back again to the correct position. At last, perhaps just as you have allowed your eyes to wander to the crowd—the eager lines of eyes—the blow you have been getting restless for will finish the play between this couple for the night. It will be a tremendous blow. One of them will have jumped clean up in the air in a sitting position, will have feinted with his left foot, and, while still in the air, will have brought his right ankle round with a swish into the cheek of the other, who has incautiously ducked that way. Over he will go, head over heels, flying into the spectators, and he will not get up for some time, while the friends of the victor will rush in and make mimic attacks and receive comic kicks, as he scornfully prances about. It is rather a slow business, on the whole, for the youths will spar round, and prance about, and feint, and fool one another for an hour, before a good blow is got home; but to see one such blow it is well worth while to sit up all night. It is no gentle business, this 'play' of the Hausas, and it is magnificent exercise for every muscle of the body.

Mamodu was a good player, and the year he worked in the telegraph service, the first year of his marriage, was perhaps the happiest in his life. He had plenty of money. He was really a rich man, for he had many ways of making money quite unknown to the postmaster, and utterly outside his work for the Government. To the

unpractised eye he was but a naked nigger, as he sprawled outside the post-office; but to the man who knew, he was palpably well-to-do. His cover was hung carefully up inside, among the cork hats of the apprentices; it was a Bida tope, snow-white, with green cotton patterning which had taken weeks of patient work. True, he lay on the steps in a loin-cloth, but it was clean. He wore a whole collection of belts. A 2-inch leather one, with key-rings, that was a relic of his service; the back-bone of a snake which had died near an ant-hill and had been picked clean before it was found and threaded on cotton —this was smooth and well rounded, it was probably the first finery he bought; several black girdles of native beads or nutshell discs; and the inevitable Kano-made belt-purse, red, black, and yellow.

He had strings of 'ju-jus' hanging in a bunch round his neck on plaited leather thongs. White Men were always inquisitive about those 'ju-jus'—the mystic pads of Kano leather, with their weird and unintelligible ornamentation, like pocket-books without an opening. Mamodu never sold his 'ju-jus,' though he had several chaffing offers for them. One cost him five shillings—that was against bruises; another cost him ten—it was against the trembling-fever; another at the same price was worth much more, for it was against small-pox, and his cheek was still smooth. For all the ills of life—some quite unmentionable—he had his 'ju-ju.' The most superior of all was a shiny black one, for which he had given no less than two pounds—six weeks' wages—but he thought it was worth every penny, for it was against *lies and the White Man.*

Mamodu was very happy, even if his ideas of a career were a little vague. He had not intended to go back to service again, but it was his fate to do so. The Chief Justice happened to be holding a court in Jebba, and he happened to be robbed. Now the Chief Justice did not like being robbed; it was his greatest boast that he had

never been victimized during all the years he had been on the Coast. He had two methods of keeping robbers away. One was to carry no money about with him, and to have none at his quarters—that is to say, nothing but a trifling sum for small expenses; for the rest he gave cheques on the Anglo-African Bank at Lokoja. Then he made his boy give him his revolver every night as he got into the net. He let him see him load it regularly and put it under his pillow. He knew very well that the boy would talk about it in the kitchens, so that it would get spread abroad and keep thieves away. So it did, until at last, one night, while he was dining with the treasurer, someone came into his empty quarters and took away the steel box with the revolver and cartridges in it. The box was found at daybreak, smashed open with a rock in the bush, and nothing had been taken but the revolver and a few hundred pounds of dum-dums. The loss was more serious than one of money would have been, for revolvers and ammunition were fetching high prices then Kano way.

The Chief Justice went and saw the Resident about it, and it was arranged that the markets and a few houses should be searched, that wires should be sent at once to all the surrounding stations, and that men should be sent quietly out along all the roads; but he was told he might as well look for a needle in a haystack. Then he sent for Mamodu, and had a talk with him on the veranda, and this is what was said:

'Mamodu, you fit to come and work for me?'

'No, sah; I no fit. Your boy Ganna live, sah.'

'I no keep him. He let someone come and teef my box.'

'I no tink he be teef, sah.'

'No, nor do I. But I no keep fool-boy who no look out. You fit to come?'

'No, sah; I no fit to work for White Man any more, sah.'

'How much your last master pay you, Mamodu?'

'He pay me tirty-five shilling a mont, sah.'

'I fit to pay you three pound.'

'No, sah; I no fit.'

'Well, think it over . . . Mamodu.'

'Sah.'

'You savvy who teef my box?'

'No, sah.'

'You fit to look* um?'

'No, sah; I no savvy dem teef-man, sah.'

'You fit to find um?'

'I fit to find um, sah, but I no tink I look um.'

'Mamodu, see, I give you five pound if you look um.'

'Heh.'

'Think it over.'

Next morning Mamodu turned up and said, 'Good-mornin', sah.'

'Good-morning, Mamodu.'

A pause.

'How much you say you fit to pay me, sah?'

'I fit to pay you three pound a month. You fit?'

'I fit, sah.'

'Very well; here are the keys.'

And Mamodu was a boy again.

The Chief Justice went over to make it all right with the postmaster, and when he came back said:

'Well, Mamodu, you look um?'

'I find um, sah; but I no look um.'

'You fit to go find um again?'

'I no tink.'

'Why not?'

'I no tink dam teef-man live for Jebba, sah.'

'You think he go away?'

* Nothing is more confusing in the horrible pigeon English of the Coast than the use of the words 'find' and 'look.' 'Find' means to seek or look for; 'look' means to find or recover.

'I no savvy, sah.'

'I don't think he go away yet. I send telegram to all the places, and they say no man come. I think he live for Jebba, so you fit to go find um again?'

'No, sah; I no tink he sit down for Jebba, sah, or de boys dey go tell me, sah.'

'Well, he must be hiding about somewhere near, for the police have stopped all the roads.'

'You no tink he go down river, sah?' . . . and so on. The Chief Justice could get nothing out of him; it was evident Mamodu could not, or would not, find the thief, so he gave it up as a bad job, and consoled himself with the consideration that the theft had at least led to him getting an undoubtedly good servant.

He dined that night with the Secretary, and among the guests was the captain of a Niger Company's steamer, which was leaving in the morning. The theft was the topic of the hour, much to the Chief Justice's annoyance. Two days later he got a wire from the captain: 'Caught your thief. Offering dum-dums to our agent at Shonga. Sending him by mail steamer.' Two more days past, and the Jebba crowd was astonished to see the thief landed in chains and under an escort. This was the quickest capture on record, and many well-known friends of the culprit cleared out that very afternoon. The story was buzzed all over the place before it was dark. It caused much headshaking, and the power of the White Man was in everyone's mouth. Mamodu was all smiles, and hung round his master's desk in the afternoon. He was on the point of mentioning the five pounds several times, but did not do so, for he saw that it never entered the Chief Justice's mind. After dinner he sat for some time on the veranda steps fondling his shining black 'ju-ju,' turning it over and scowling at it. Then he got up quietly, hitched his cover over his shoulder, and stalked into the darkness, down the hill to his compound. He turned up smiling in

the morning, and the memory of the five pounds which was never mentioned increased his respect for the White Man's 'ju-ju.' If he hadn't seen with his own eyes that it was quite forgotten, he would have asked for it; but he was half afraid of the justice of the White Man, which he could never understand, and he knew that some knowledge could be dangerous. If he had asked for it, he would not have got it, and the indignant way in which the obligation would have been repudiated would have increased his respect for the ability of his master; as it was, he saw he had forgotten it, and that was how his respect was increased for the White Man's 'ju-ju.'

Mamodu got on very well in his new place, and his master grew to like talking to him as he sat in his bath or dressed for mess. Everyone of the 'ju-jus' round the boy's neck was discussed in turn, and the white man good-naturedly refrained from expressing doubt as to their efficiency when he found a playful offer to give double value for them rather frightened him than anything else. Mamodu would not sell his 'ju-jus'; but he brought trader after trader to the veranda while his master sipped his tea and read papers, and these satisfied him with new ones—base imitations which changed hands for the value of the leatherwork, a few pence. Under Mamodu's management there was always fish on the table. Not bony with the muddy taste, but as firm and white as cod. There was always abundance of fresh fruit and vegetables. Mamodu surpassed himself, for was he not drawing three pounds a month? He would sometimes take his master to market, and one of the small boys would follow with a sack for the purchases. This was generally carried home full, for Mamodu cheapened like a Jew. On these occasions he would wear his most brilliant gown, and the white man would be much impressed by the unwonted respect with which everyone saluted him. He was totally unable to discern how much this respect was paid to his

mere colour, and how much to the man whom Mamodu had chosen to serve.

Mamodu had a great respect for his master, and in a very short time that gentleman acquired a kind of respect for him. He would not have liked to admit it at the mess, for the young officers would have misunderstood him; but it grew all the same. His eyes were first opened to the fact that he had got hold of more than an ordinary boy by an incident in the market. It was one day when he had been specially pleased by some little astuteness in a bargain, and had stopped at one of the stalls, where a hideous old woman was sitting in a kneeling position among the merchandise, taking fresh red kola-nuts from a matting bundle and setting them out in little piles in front of her. He asked Mamodu if he would like some kola-nuts, and, that being something like asking a ferret if it would like to suck a rabbit, turned to the old woman and asked how much. She did not understand, and looked at Mamodu, who said: 'See-see, sah.' 'Very well, here's sixpence. I dash you!' Mamodu hesitated, and then, the sixpence in his fingers, stooped and picked up one nut. 'Why, you only take one; you no fit to pay see-see for that.' Mamodu opened his mouth and looked sheepish. His master couldn't understand why; but thinking that perhaps he meant to come back later on and make a better bargain when unencumbered of the presence of the White Man, which, in the case of a gift, he did not approve, swiftly picked up the heap of nuts, and put them into his hands. Mamodu stood with them for a moment in doubt, and as the old woman merely looked quickly from one to the other, it was evident she had got her sixpence all right. Then he gave the nuts back to the old woman, who took them obediently as he held out his hands.

'What you do that for?' said his master.

'She go keep um for me, sah.'

'She go teef um from you, you fool!'

'No, sah; she be mee own mudder.'

That was the solution of the mystery—he had been buying the boy his own kola-nuts, and as the white man looked at the well-kept stall, with its high pile of pagan cloth, its bundle of Bida topes, its bale of leather, and heap of slippers and knife-sheaths from Kano, its strings of beads from Illorin, its shellfuls of tin from Bautshi, its rough foolscap from Marseilles, its needles and bone ornaments from Germany and Tripoli, it flashed across his mind that this was no ordinary boy.

It was but a trivial incident, but it opened the white man's eyes, and he kept them open. It was the memory of this prosperous little business in the market, this evidence of wealth far beyond the attainment of the son of a Hausa slave or a white man's servant, quite as much as it was the chance sight of Mamodu behind the kitchen talking to the witnesses in a murder case, which changed his mind, when a few months later on he had thoughts of appointing him his court interpreter. He got into the habit, nevertheless, of discussing some of the cases with him, and from him he learnt much about native witnesses. He never discussed any case until after it was decided, because he found that it was impossible not to be prejudiced by opinions he had expressed. He even had thoughts of forbidding him to sit among the audience in his court; but as he watched the boy thinking in the sunlight, with his eyes half-closed and his fingers drumming the monotony of the tomtom on the step, he decided that if Mamodu wished to make himself felt in the court-house, he could do so without being there in the flesh.

He was surprised day by day at the boy's intelligence, and was sorry that he could neither read nor write. He tried to get him to learn, but it was no use. Mamodu said he was too old 'to go for school,' and that there was no good in the White Man's 'books'; and that if he wanted a letter written in Hausa or Arabic, there was always a

Mallam in the market-place. He tried, too, to break him of the horrible pigeon-English he had picked up from the other boys; but after spending a whole evening trying to drum into his head that to 'find' a thing was more than to seek it, and that when he had found it, it was not necessary to use another word and say he 'looked' it, when he found that the assistance of the superfluous verb 'go' was as necessary to his sentences as the superfluous adjective seems to be to the British workman at home, then he gave it up as a bad job.

Mamodu was well in with the Mallams, and often told his master of things which had happened in other parts of the country almost as soon as the news came in code along the wire, and much sooner than it came up with the mail-steamer. He told him this way of the fire at Lokoja, when the whole Yoruba quarter was burnt. He knew all about the Niger Company man who had run out of the store and made them all work like furies at pulling down compounds to keep the flames from licking up the whole town. How he had burnt his hands falling down all among the ashes, and had to go to hospital next day. How he had shouted and stormed and beaten those who would not work to save other men's property. How he got so hoarse he could hardly speak. How he worked with his own hands and then with his feet, until a seven-pounder shell, which some bad men had stolen and hidden in the thatch, went off with a bang, and a bit of it went screaming, like a crane struck by a hawk, within a few feet of his head; and he went up to the Residency to ask for the soldiers to be turned out. He told how several people said the White Man had set the place on fire themselves because it made them sick, and how that silly story was started by a boy working in the store. He knew that it was a silly story, for was not the fire started by Fatima, the pilot's wife, who had let her fire go out, like a careless woman would, and was coming back from the next com-

pound, where she had been to borrow a log all glowing at one end. He told how she had found a strange sheep in her doorway, and how she smote it with the log, so that plenty-plenty sparks went all over the grass-mat wall of the hut, 'and it go s-s-s-s-s-s-s, and she fall down, and go run.' This is but the skeleton of the story narrated one evening; but when out of curiosity his master wrote and asked about it, he found it was all founded on fact, except that the cantonment magistrate had been unable to discover how it was caused, or who started a certain very dangerous rumour about the White Man. The incident was closed and pigeon-holed by the time the Chief Justice got his answer. Mamodu had heard it all from a Mallam.

The white man grew quite fond of listening to Mamodu. He found excuses more often for not going to the local mess and for having his meal alone, so that he might sit and suck his pipe outside in the cool breeze, while Mamodu sat on the steps and told story after story of the White Man. He had not always been a civilian's boy. Once he had worked for a whole year for different officers—that was when he learned to cook—but they had beaten him 'too-much'; and when they went 'on palaver' there was not much to eat, and the nights were 'cold plenty.' He had been on palaver once himself, so he knew. This is about how he described it:

'When we come near Raha de people no run away. Dey go to make palaver plenty much. And all de country be full of men. And some of de men run, and some of de men have "doki"—plenty "doki."* We have sma-small men. Captain Keyes, he make some look *so*, and some *so*, and some *so*, and some *so*. And he make-a put machine-gun at de corner where de hill was black for Raha men. And he make us all sit down in de middle. And we all sit down. And all de soldiers dey make great noise. Dey

* 'Doki' is the Hausa for a horse.

all fire um gun all togedder. Den dey go banga-banga-bang-bang-bang! And de Raha men no mind at all. Den de white man—one white man—he go sit behind de machine-gun. And it go b-r-r-r-r-r-r! And he move it round *so*, and all de Raha men fall down flat. And dey no get up again. Den de soldiers, dey run de gun to de odder corner where de Raha men be close too-much. And de white man he go get behind it again *so*. And he move it round *so*. And everybody fall down flat. And de Raha men dey run away. And de white man he feel de machine-gun. And he want to go catch um, but Captain Keyes he say "No!" Den dey all go for Raha, all 'e same as dey go for polo-ground when de band play. And dey go burn um. And I sit all de time *so*. And I put my hands *so*. And I no like um. But de melliki (medico) he no mind at all. He sit in him long chair all among de boys. And all 'e time he make book. And he no look up at all. All 'e same as if he live for veranda. And he pull my ear, and he say: "What you go cry for?" And I feel shame. Oh, Captain Keyes, he have big-big heart! All 'e time he have no gun. And he no shoot um revolver at all. He never do notting at all. Only he stand *so*. And he put um hand in um belt *so*. And he point *so* and *so*, and he give order. And everybody do what he say. And it be all right. Oh, Captain Keyes, he have big-big heart!'

The Chief Justice liked to walk out half a mile into the bush with Mamodu and with one of the small-boys to carry the sparklet bottle and fixings. He would sit on the edge of a cliff overlooking the plain of the river valley, and he would watch the native town spread out below him like a map. He would watch the water of the little stream, which was never dry, tumbling down out of sight over the edge of the precipice, to fall on the rocks, so far below that the sound of it was drowned in the rippling close behind him. He would turn and look up the chine

the waters had worn for themselves, and his eyes would rest long on the hanging vegetation, the white and yellow masses of bloom weighing down the big trees, and the blazes of brilliant orchids. He would breathe the sickening scent, and wonder whether wealth could ever counterfeit such a glade under glass. From time to time he would feel that his revolver was handy, for Mamodu once showed him the footprints of a leopard as he stepped over the stream, and the traces of baboons were unmistakable. He would sit there on a flat rock, under the shade of the flowering trees, and he would tempt Mamodu to tell him of the 'ju-jus' of the animals—the 'ju-ju' of the leopard, when the whole village must dance round the hut of the successful hunter, to avert the evil spirit; the 'ju-ju' of the crocodile, which took its dole most moons at the bathing-place, unless appeased by dancing and noise. So he learned the meaning of one of the hideous noises of the night. He pretended to be incredulous, and asked how it was that the last man at whom the crocodile had rushed had escaped with a lacerated arm. Then he was told how the man was squatting in the shallow, cleaning his mouth, and throwing the water over his shoulder, when the crocodile grabbed him; how two soldiers, who were also there, held on to his feet, and dug their heels in the sand, and pulled and screamed; how plenty of people ran along the bank; how the crocodile let go, and how the men fell backwards, and everybody ran away. He asked whether the soldiers had a 'ju-ju' against the crocodile, and when Mamodu said, 'No, sah; dis be "ju-ju" crocodile. But dey be White Man soldier, sah; and White Man "ju-ju" pass all "ju-ju," sah,' he said it was time to go home, and got up. It was not necessary to call the small-boy; he kept very close to his master on these little excursions.

He began to understand why the boy would not sell his 'ju-jus'; and he began to learn as much about 'ju-ju'

from Mamodu as he learned of the Mohammedan Law from the Alkali. There was the 'ju-ju' of the moon, which kept thieves away. There was the 'ju-ju' of women, which made men bewitched. There was the 'ju-ju' of the tomtom, which was beaten when the floor of a new hut was being laid of brown pots, ant earth, and tree-juice, and patted down hard and smooth; the point of that 'ju-ju' was that the floor would not crack if the women only kept time with the tomtom as they beat. He found the boy no longer believed the cunning story which was so maliciously circulated by the old sinner who was Emir of Kontagora in the days when the White Man only built factories on the river bank—the story that the White Man was a kind of fish, and that his 'ju-ju' had no power on the land; that he came from the sea, and had to keep going back into it to get his 'ju-ju' renewed every few years; that unless he did this his 'ju-ju' would grow weak, and then he would grow pale and sicken, and die, without being poisoned; that if ever the White Man ventured away from the river his 'ju-ju' would not help him. This was indeed a cunning story, and it served its purpose long; but Mamodu had been to Raha, and he knew that, though the White Man got his 'ju-ju' renewed every year when he sailed away from Burutu, to come back in six months with colour in his lips and a smile on his cheek—though he knew no one need be so silly as to doubt that, still, it could not be denied that the 'ju-ju' was quite as effective on land as water.

Mamodu called himself a Christian—that is to say, he killed a sheep and gave his wife a new gown on Christmas Day; but he was a Mohammedan as well. At first his master thought his Christianity was a pretence, but it puzzled him more after he had spent an evening trying to make him understand that he would think no worse of him for being a Mohammedan out and out. He once told him he was not a Christian himself; but only once,

for the boy's face, as he heard that, was so full of incredulity that he never said it again. What the boy said was: 'But you no follow Mahomet, sah.' Next time a Mohammedan feast-day came round he pretended to refuse to give him a holiday, and poor Mamodu was much upset. He stood first on one foot and then on the other, as his master ate his breakfast, and stared straight through the doorway into the sky. Then his master took pity on him and said:

'But, Mamodu, why can't you be Christian all the time?'

'I no tink, sah.'

'Well, you're a poor sort of Christian, anyway.'

'No, sah. I be half and half, but'—hastily correcting himself—'I follow White Man pass Mahomet, sah. I tink you fit to give me half a day, sah.'

And he got it all.

The Chief Justice found himself thinking 'ju-ju' into things as well. There was the fate which made the Foreign Office interfere, just in the nick of time, to prevent the three Frenchmen who had murdered Captain Keyes being hanged. Did not the Director of Public Works build a gallows near the hospital and put three hooks on it? Did not the Chief Justice himself say they should be hanged by the neck until they were dead? Was not the gallows still standing waiting for them, until the ants had built their channels all over it? What was it which brought the cable tick-ticking over the sea in time? On the other hand, why did the cable break down on Coronation Day, of all days, so that there was nothing to stay the rejoicings in the one Dominion of all the Dominions of the Great White King, where a postponement would have meant so much? Then, too, there was the extraordinary chain of events, the inexplicable muddling of negotiations, which led to Fad-al-Allah meeting the inevitable fate of the native who breaks the 'ju-ju' of the

White Man. He had beheaded Behagle; but he would have made an excellent ruler for Bornu; still he had beheaded Behagle, and—well, who had ever been known to be successful in opposing the punitive expedition which inevitably followed the murder even of a White Man's messenger? Then there were those three lions which stalked across the site chosen for the new cantonments when the first lot of labourers arrived at *Z*ungeru. These had walked quietly away, looking over their backs. Did not the labourers all say so? Verily, it was an uncanny land.

Mamodu never had so much respect for his master as he did after a certain river picnic. The small-boy didn't go on that trip; he had to stop at home and help the cook do some washing, and he was left behind thumping tearfully at a huge bowl of suds. An empty whisky-case had been filled with everything necessary for the afternoon—to wit, a sparklet bottle, a tin mug, ship's biscuits, a kettle, a tin of milk, a sweater to come home in, and a mackintosh and some whisky in case of rain. Mamodu lifted this on to his head and walked in front. A deck-chair was thrust on to the top of it at the last moment. It was, of course, a hot day, but there was a suspicion of tornado about. The rains were just overdue, and the sky was full of clouds when the sun was low. It was not to be a long trip, but Mamodu had been commissioned to secure the best canoe obtainable, and three of the strongest and most expert polers he could find. He had done well; and when he had descended the steep *zigzag* path down Government Hill, and brought his master to the waterside, three magnificent specimens of muscle were busily putting the last touches to a temporary awning of mats, tied to lengths of tough creeper which had been carefully arched over from the sides of a canoe not yet patched. This was only a small one as canoes went—some 30 feet in length—but it was hewn out of a solid piece of hard-

wood. It was 3 feet wide, 18 inches deep, shaped somewhat after the style of a Thames punt, as dry as a board, and steady. A boy from the crowd was despatched by Mamodu to the town to fetch some bananas, and another hurried off with a note to the captain of the Governor's steamer, which happened to be at the wharf, asking for the loan of a can of condensed water. As the Chief Justice sat in his chair on the mud, and watched the men working at the awning, he thought the condenser might be added to the list of the White Man's 'ju-jus'—'a ju-ju' against fever and mosquitos. Soon the box and the bananas were stowed in the shade, the last scrap of grass had been flicked overboard, the chair had been pushed under the awning, and the white man stepped on board. Two polers threw off their covers and stepped into the canoe in front; one stood up on the little platform behind, Mamodu sat on the gunwale, and the Chief Justice again leant back in his chair, prepared to enjoy a half-holiday after his own heart.

The canoe kept to the left bank for a couple of hundred yards, and it was slow progress, for the current ran that side and was strong. Creeping along close in, the men got a good push off from the rocks as often as possible. The poles were made of the centre stalk of a great palm frond, as light as pith and as strong as ash. Sometimes the notch at the pushing end would slip on the surface of a wet boulder; then the pole would shoot out to arms' length, and drop with a smack on the water, only to be recovered with a swish for another try. The men never lose their balance; it is their ancient river craft, and they know it thoroughly. The canoe crept along the base of the cliff of Government Hill, like a mantis crawling round a lamp; and Mamodu did not watch the poles so carefully, or grip the gunwale so hard, when, coming to the rock which jutted far out into the river, turning the main current into midstream, the prow swung round, and the

CANOES ON THE NIGER.

JU-JU ROCK, JEBBA.

steersman behind gave a final push straight out towards the opposite shore.

The front men slipped their poles in-board, and took up long-handled paddles. Standing up, they dug the huge blades deep down, grunting 'Huss!' at every stroke. The progress was still slow, for the current swept the canoe back fast, until the paddles touched the sand, two-thirds of the way across, and it was a different matter altogether. As the water grew shallower, the poles were taken up again. The men in front drove them straight down on to the sand from the prow, and then, pushing hard from the shoulder all the way, ran down the slope of the boat as it leapt forward. A final push, and the pole was recovered with a swish, to be tilted over in the air as the man walked up to the prow again. The man on the platform at the stern did not walk about, but he pushed lustily nevertheless, crouching each time to his heels. The water rippled at the prow, and the white man could not at first keep his head from jerking backwards every time.

The pace, considering the current, was excellent, but there was plenty of time to watch the women washing the household calabashes in the shoal. Every now and then one would slip out of a girl's hands and float spinning away; then there would be much splashing and merriment over its recovery. Mamodú left the gunwale, where he was in the way, and squatted on his heels facing the shore, where, one after another, the people at the water's edge caught his eye and acknowledged him. Everybody seemed to know him. The sharp lads who were bathing pointed him out; the gray-bearded men crouched in orthodox Hausa fashion as he passed, and murmured salutations. When one did this, Mamodu would move forward himself, and stick a hand out over the gunwale towards him. Presently they passed the last shoal, where the soldiers had come down to wash, and the white man said:

'They no fear the "ju-ju" crocodile, Mamodu.'

'No, sah; crocodile no come when dere be plenty men, sah.'

Half a mile further up they passed the native hospital, and on the rocks some half-dozen convalescents were chattering and washing their feet. Mamodu had to stop the polers here, for his master wanted to speak to an old boy of his who had been very bad for two months, and was now nothing but skin and bone. He would not have been recognised at all, but he stood up and saluted on seeing who was under the awning.

The passing bank was a real pleasure to the white man: whether the kingfishers flapped, screaming, away, or the crimson martins came darting out of their holes; whether the rocks jutted out as they did at the hospital—and it was careful work, or the men pulled the canoe along by the overhanging branches where the water was deep, so that the creepers brushed noisily along the frail awning, which he put his hand out to steady; whether the water was black and bottomless, or ran clear over a patch of ribbed sand. His attention was torn between the plants on the bank close at hand, and the grandeur of the hills and occasional cliffs across the water.

Once, under a bank of great pink blossoms, he made the polers stop in spite of their protests, so that they lost way between two overhanging trees, and had to take up the paddles again. They did not like it at all; but he wanted some of the flowers, and broke off a few branches, just to have round him on the floor of the canoe. He asked Mamodu what he thought of them.

'I tink you want um for someting, sah.'

'I no think you care for um, Mamodu.'

'No, sah; I no fit to chop* um, sah.'

Every now and then there would be a glimpse of the bush through the creepers, and he would see the tops of

* 'Chop' is food; to 'chop,' to eat.

the trees shake as a troop of little monkeys made themselves scarce; or a huge fish would make a commotion as it sloshed its tail on a shallow and made for safety, while the polers stopped to watch the widening rings regretfully. There was so much to see that it seemed incredible it was five o'clock, when at last the canoe had been gingerly edged through the swirls round the north of the great Ju-ju Rock, standing up, after the style of Gibraltar, in mid-stream, and the party had landed on one of the chain of islets beyond it.

The polers, who had promptly disappeared into the little patch of bushes on the rock, returned with armfuls of sticks, and Mamodu lit a fire to lee of the deck-chair. The chair was perched on a flat slab of stone 3 feet above the water, which, running round the corner of it, filled the air with a pleasant swish and gurgle. The fire was much the same as one makes when camping out at home, but the sticks were thicker, and, being gummy, burnt fiercely enough without need for a heap of smaller ones to make a glow. Three stones were fished out of the mud where the drift collected, and a few sticks pushed between them, burning where they touched one another; just a little blowing, and Mamodu only had to push the sticks every now and then with his toes, as he sat to wait for the kettle to 'talk.' Two holes were jabbed in the milk-tin, and the white man sipped at the pannikin and munched bananas and ship's biscuits—splitting these with his knife first, to be sure there were no weevils.

Looking across along the string of islets, which between them held the river up nearly a foot, with Ju-ju Rock towering on the right, a mass of brown flecked with green, the picture was one for an artist's brush alone, and the white man could have sat there until the sun had dipped and the moon risen; but Mamodu, having packed up the things, came and said:

'I tink we fit to go, sah.'

'But why?'

'Nobody ever pass "Ju-ju" for night time, sah.'

'Why ever not?'

'"Ju-ju" catch um, sah.'

'What rubbish! I stop until——'

'No, sah; I beg you, sah!' entreated Mamodu, looking much upset.

The white man swung round, and saw the three men standing by the canoe close together, and watching him with evident anxiety. Then he looked down-stream, past the base of Ju-ju Rock, and for half a minute watched the many wicked swirls and the tips of submerged rocks, any one of which, he realized, 'ju-ju' or no 'ju-ju,' might well upset a canoe even in broad daylight. So he got out of his chair, which Mamodu wasted no time in clapping together and popping into the canoe. 'Buck up!' said the white man; 'hurry, hurry!' and it was a cheerful party once more.

The canoe was to drift back in mid-stream; but it was necessary to use the paddles passing the rocks, and the men grunted and dug the blades in savagely now and then, until they were once more in smooth water and the steersman could sit on the stern and trail his paddle quietly behind him. The white man could not keep his eyes off the rock, the great Ju-ju Rock from which someone had solemnly cursed the White Man, and which was reputed to be fatal to any white man rash enough to try to scale it, especially after one Niger Company's agent sprained his ankle running down helter-skelter with the rock bees round his ears, and another had died of fever a few days after falling into a bog before even starting the climb. The 'ju-ju' had been broken by a couple of lieutenants in the West African Frontier Force, who had left a Union Jack on the top—the pole still sticks out of the cairn they piled up; and there was more than one reason for using the rock as a target for artillery practice from the camp a

mile and a half away. To this day the native believes that anyone who goes up it will die within a year—with more reason, too, than the faith which keeps Englishmen from sitting thirteen at table. Thinking of this, the Chief Justice said:

'So everyone die in one year, Mamodu?'

'I savvy, sah.'

'But nobody die for Jebba for plenty-time?'

'No, sah. Perhaps dey no die for Jebba, sah; but dey die, sah.'

After Ju-ju Rock was left behind the white man still looked back. Then, on the other side of the stream, silhouetted against the sky, he saw a troop of baboons—old ones and little ones—creeping about from one to another. Three of them sat out clearly in a row on the edge of the cliff, and appeared to be gazing at the fleeting glow where the sun had gone down. The steersman spoke, and the others grinned aloud. There was evidently something personal going about, so the Chief Justice said:

'What did he say, Mamodu?'

'I no savvy, sah.'

'Mamodu, confound you! What did he say?'

'I no hear, sah.'

'Then ask him, and don't play the fool! I shan't chop him.'

'He say, sah, monkey look for 'Ju-ju' all 'e same Batoori,* sah.'

'Oh,' said the Batoori, and mentally noted to get his own back.

The night was still; presently, on passing a cliff, the Batoori thought there might be an echo, and shouted. There was, a most unmistakable one, and the polers sprang to their feet with a squeal and paddled away from it. He made them sit down again, and shouted several times. They peered into the darkness of the cliff, and

* 'Batoori'=White Man.

even Mamodu looked uneasy. The Batoori looked at their faces, and suddenly decided to get his own back over the echo, so said:

'"You hear my brother, Mamodu?'

'You no have brudder, sah.'

'Yes. Didn't you hear him? My "ju-ju" brother, who always follows me about.'

'Hhah!'

Mamodu spoke to the men, and they insisted on paddling further out into the stream, and they watched the Batoori with open mouths.

'What do he say, sah?' said Mamodu, just a little nervously.

'He ask me where I get these fool Nupe men from.'

'Hhah!' said Mamodu, and passed it on to the Nupe men, who raised themselves 6 inches and sat down again.

'He ask me why I no get Yoruba men with plenty head.'

'No, sah.'

'So he say. Tell them.'

Mamodu did so, and they were visibly upset, but sat and took it, and the night was very still.

Then the steersman spoke to Mamodu in a whisper, and Mamodu said he wanted to know whether there would be plenty water soon—the rains were a little late that year. The cliff had been left behind, and the river ran in to a shelving hillside, so the Batoori said his brother had gone away.

Mamodu interpreted, but the steersman entreated.

'He beg you, sah,' said Mamodu.

'Very well; call him.'

'I no fit, sah.'

'Go on. Just shout "Wha!"'

After some persuasion Mamodu did, with no result. Then the Batoori gave a long 'Cooo-ee,' and there was just a faint response.

'He live, sah!'

'Yes; see he run along the hill. He go there,' said the Chief Justice, pointing to the next cliff.

Mamodu looked incredulous; but sure enough, as the canoe passed opposite the cliff, the 'ju-ju' brother answered—with such clearness, too, that even the Batoori himself started, it sounded so weird in the darkness. The polers crouched lower still and lifted their elbows, but the steersman spoke.

'What do he say, sah?' said the boy.

'He say, Mamodu, that they fit to go ask Yoruba man;' and the steersman looked sullen.

While the 'ju-ju' brother was being shouted to there rose a jabber of baboons, from where another pack of them had come down at the corner of the cliff to drink. The steersman said something, but this time the others did not grin; they only grunted disapproval.

The boy waved his hand in deprecation, and said:

'He say, dis no be your brudder, too, sah?'

'No Mamodu. They all come down to see Batoori, and they make all that jabber because there are plenty monkey and they can't all see at once, but they all want to be in front.'

The steersman was contrite. Presently one old baboon began to roar above the rest, like a mastiff barking with a sore throat.

'Listen!' said the Batoori. 'That's the chief.'

'What do he say, sah?'

'He say: "All over. Batoori go out of sight in the night. Go away all of you. Go home and get chop ready."'

Mamodu squealed with delight and fell off his heels, then he interpreted it three times over, and it was a merry party when the canoe drew up alongside the steamer to return the water-can. When the men had been paid, one of them hoisted the box on to his head, and another

followed up the steep zigzag path in the darkness. When the veranda was reached they would take nothing extra for this, and the Batoori was amused to find the second one had carried with him the branches of pink tree-flowers. He took them and said 'Good,' faded as they were, and watched the couple stalk out of sight; then, as the murmur of their voice reached him until they were over the brow of the hill, he thought he would like to know what they thought of him.

That night he had the papers telling him of the action of the High Commissioner in forgiving the old Emir of Kontagora and sending him to live on parole at Yola. This was one of the Fulani rulers, a relative of the Sultan of Sokoto, who had persisted in slave-raiding and, when the Sultan wrote him not to do so, sent back the answer: 'Can a cat stop catching mice? When I die, it will be with a slave in my mouth.' He had twice fought the Niger Company, and had twice been beaten. A few months ago he had risen again, and had gone on the war-path against the Emir of Zaria, who was then professing to be friendly, and had sent urgent requests to the White Man to save him. This had been done with great smartness, and the old villain had been captured alive and taken to Lokoja. There His Excellency had a long talk with him, had explained that he did not come to conquer the country, only to keep the peace in it; not to live on it, but to trade and see it was governed well. The upshot was that Kontagora had taken an oath on the Koran, an oath he would not break, not to rebel again.

Mamodu, of course, knew all about Kontagora, and, much to his master's surprise, also knew about him being sent to sit down at Yola, and the name of the Mallam who had gone with him. He listened with a quiet face while his master talked of forgiveness, and when asked, 'Well, Mamodu, don't you think it was

good of the Governor to have been so merciful?' said: 'I no savvy what dat mercifu' mean, sah.' 'Well, what do you think about it?' 'I tink—I tink, Kontagora "ju-ju" pass White Man "ju-ju," sah.' And his master gave 'ju-ju' up as hopeless.

Still, after that day on the river, Mamodu had a much greater respect for his master. Perhaps it was the thought of the 'ju-ju' brother; perhaps it was the discovery that his master, with all his apparent frankness, knew very well how to fool silly canoemen with 'ju-ju' talk. Who can tell? The line between the believer and the priest is often hardly discernible. It was only after that day that Mamodu allowed himself to be drawn about the great Fulani 'ju-ju'—the prophecy of Othman Fodio, the first Sultan of Sokoto. Mamodu knew all about the death-bed scene, and described it at times so fervently that the white man wondered how it was the Hausas had no theatres. The boy would say:

'Den he go sick. And he lie still. And all de Mallam dey sit round. And him bret come *so*. Den it all go dark, all 'e same as if it be night. And he sit up, and his face make light all round. And all de Mallam fall down and hide der face. And he point to de wall. And dey all look, but it be dark. Den a boy go to him. It be one of de boys de Mallam teach. And de boy he cry. And he take de boy and he breed on um eyes *so*. And de boy look at de wall. And de wind talk plenty. And de boy's eyes dey grow big. And de boy tremble too-much and fear plenty. Den he fall back, and he die. And de wind no talk any more. Den de Mallam take de boy, and no one ever see him any more. But he tell all.'

The white man knew all about the prophecy, and was much interested in the many stories of it. Mamodu did not always tell it the same. The boy, for instance, was added one day after a new Mallam came to the battalion; and when his master challenged this additional touch of

colour, Mamodu merely said, 'So de new Mallam tell me, sah.' The prophecy was that Othman's dynasty would last for a hundred years; that the sixteenth Sultan of Sokoto should reign but for a day; that then would come a foreign power in the land for four years; and then the Mahdi, and it would be all right. Mamodu knew all about the hundred years being just up; he knew the fifteenth Sultan was an old, old man; he knew the White Man was building a railway at *Z*ungeru; but he only said, 'I no savvy, sah,' under his breath when his master asked him what he thought about the four years.

Mamodu knew all about the prophecy, and he, and thousands like him, would nod their heads at one another when Colonel Morland's little army, after taking Kano, hurried across in the cold to Sokoto, and the sixteenth Sultan, who had just buried the old man, fled. He will pick up from the soldiers' Mallams wonderful tales of the miracles of the march, and he will tell them so often that he will even believe in the ones he will make up himself. He will have pricked up his ears when he heard that Othman's sacred green standard, the banner under which he had always been successful against the infidel a hundred years ago, and which the White Man had taken from the heap of bodies outside Sokoto, was missing after the fight.

He will tell wonderful stories of that. He will sit near the tomtoms, and when the dancers are tired he will drone out long sentences, describing how the White Man rolled the standard up tight and wrapped it in cloth—'plenty cloth'; and how he put it in the guard-tent, and set pagan soldiers, recruited from the Benue district, to watch it. How a great sleep came upon them; and how, when the White Man came in the morning to look at it, and they unwrapped the cloths, lo! it had gone, and the cloths had not been undone.

Then he will tell how the caravan of the flying Sultan

was trailing across the desert in the moonlight. How his heart was heavy, and how, as his horse dragged its hoofs through the sand, his chin rested on his chest. How every one in the long line was quiet except a few, who would grunt as their horses stumbled. How one horse fell; and how, just as its rider stooped to unfasten the saddle to save it, the wind rose, and the air was full of the jangling of trappings. How everyone looked up into the wind, and how they saw a long line of horsemen in white flowing topes and with swords gleaming in the moonlight. How they all slipped off their horses, and rubbed their foreheads in the dust. How the jangling of trappings came closer, until the air was full of sand the ghostly hoofs trampled up. How in the middle, erect, high on a big black horse, rode Othman Fodio, and at his side floated the sacred green banner of old. How it seemed as if the mighty host passed through them as they crouched; and how, when they looked round, the desert was empty, save for the driving mist. How the Sultan was filled with a great shame, and wailed aloud, and would have done harm to himself; but suddenly all saw, lying at his side, the green standard, as new and bright as if it had only just been made. How the Sultan took it reverently, and how his sorrow left him. How a great joy came over the whole company. How they prayed all night, and then, in the morning, how even the horse that had fallen down to die was sound again.

Mamodu, and thousands like him, will tell these tales, while the tomtoms make night hideous, and the White Man, turning over in his bed, curses them, and resolves to make another cantonment regulation against them. Then, when the four years is up . . .

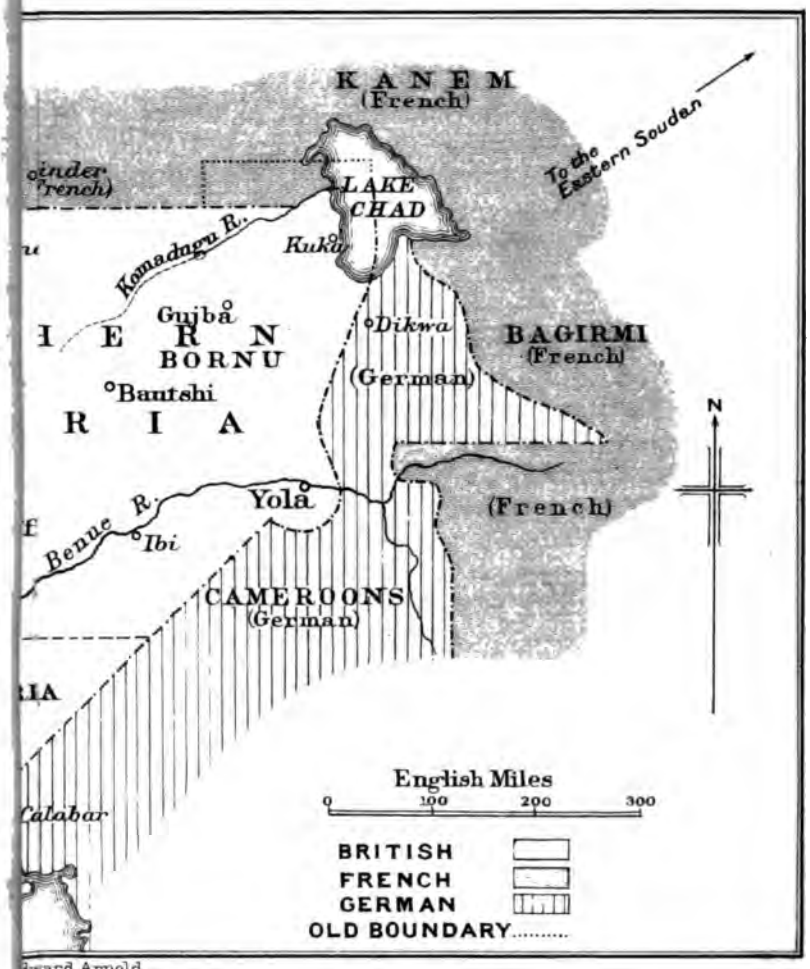
* * * * *

The fact is, that this country, away up the Niger, belongs to Mamodu. He is the man for it, though he has made a pretty mess of it in the past. It is not a White

Man's country, and the White Man does not want it, though Mamodu may think he does. He only wants to help him make the most of it. If Mamodu is left to himself he will make a mess of it again; and when another hundred years have passed, it will be as bad a blot on the face of the earth as it was ten years ago. If only he will let the White Man help, all the dwellers in the land will be as happy as himself. He is much luckier than he knows. He has a rich soil, and life is easier in his country than it is anywhere else; but he has a climate which is as bad for the White Man as the South Pole. He has cotton and palm-oil, and several other things the White Man wants. But he is luckier than he knows in that, too, for if his land were full of gold, the White Man—another kind of White Man whom he has not yet seen—would come for it, and he would have a bad time—yes, though his 'ju-jus' were ever so much stronger than they are.

* * * * *

Mamodu knows a great deal more than the white men think, and if he would only just learn ever so little more he would be a fine man—one of the best. It would do him a world of good to come over here and have a look at Fleet Street by daylight; to go over a few of our engineering shops and factories; to see a little naval gun-testing; to ride on the electric trams; and to live in a first-class hotel for a few weeks, and go up the lift: just as it would do the white men a world of good to go and look at him as he lies on his back watching the guinea-corn grow or the rubber oozing from the vines. He would alter his ideas of the white men, just as they would alter their ideas of him. At present the white men fail just as much to perceive his good points as he fails to see theirs. The white men are about as blind as he is.



dward Arnold

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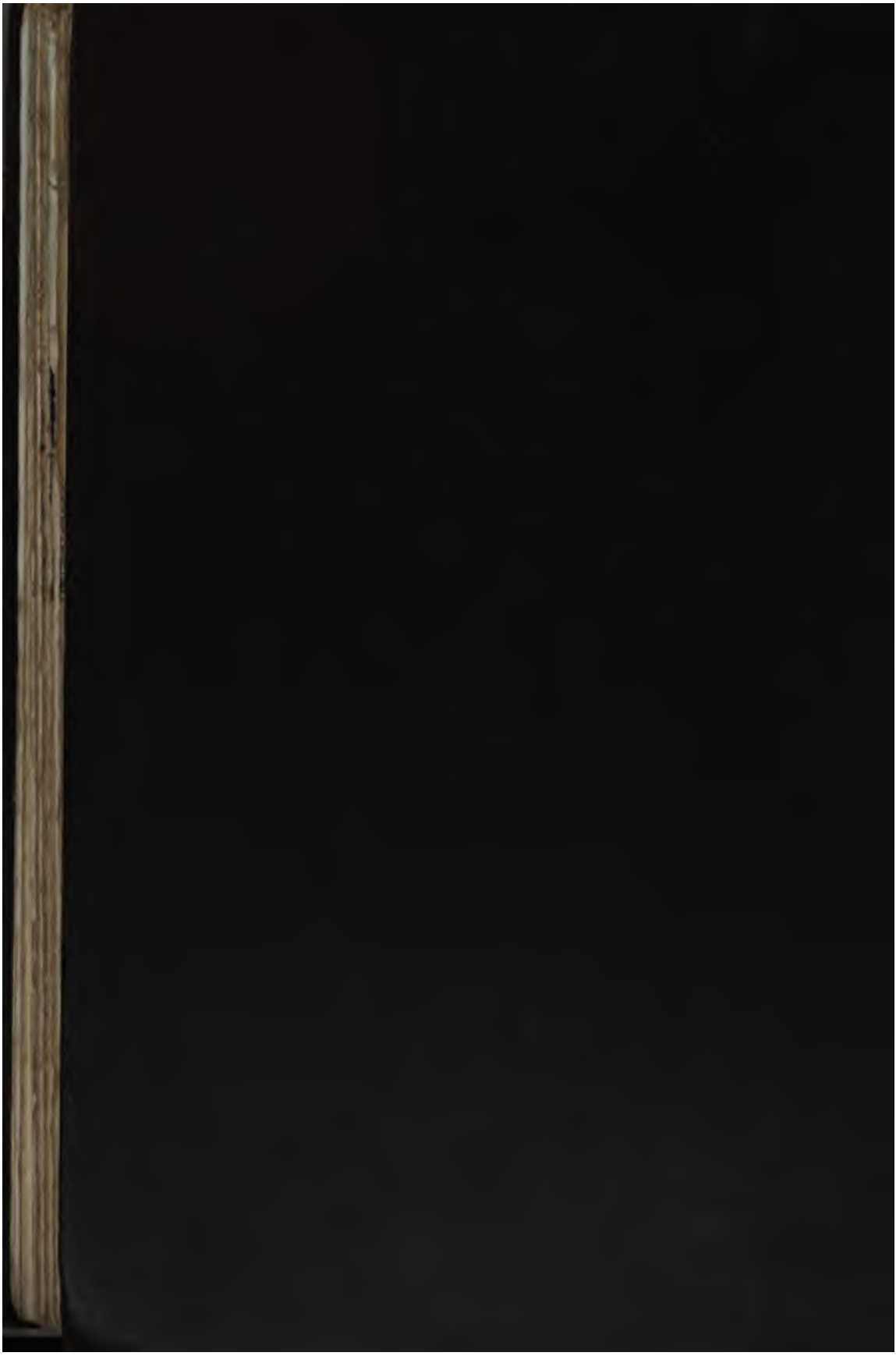
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